OXFORD STUDIES IN BYZANTIUM

Symeon Stylites the Younger and Late Antique Antioch

From Hagiography to History

LUCY PARKER

OXFORD STUDIES IN BYZANTIUM

OXFORD STUDIES IN BYZANTIUM

Oxford Studies in Byzantium consists of scholarly monographs and editions on the history, literature, thought, and material culture of the Byzantine world.

Church Architecture of Late Antique Northern Mesopotamia
Elif Keser Kayaalp

Byzantine Religious Law in Medieval Italy
James Morton

Caliphs and Merchants
Cities and Economies of Power in the Near East (700–950)
Fanny Bessard

Social Change in Town and Country in Eleventh-Century Byzantium
James Howard-Johnston

Innovation in Byzantine Medicine
The Writings of John Zacharias Aktouarios (c.1275–c.1330)
Petros Bouras-Vallianatos

Emperors and Usurpers in the Later Roman Empire
Civil War, Panegyric, and the Construction of Legitimacy
Adrastos Omissi

The *Universal History* of Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi
Introduction, Translation, and Commentary
Tim Greenwood

The Letters of Psellos
Cultural Networks and Historical Realities
Edited by Michael Jeffreys and Marc D. Lauxtermann

Holy Sites Encircled
The Early Byzantine Concentric Churches of Jerusalem
Vered Shalev-Hurvitz

Law, Power, and Imperial Ideology in the Iconoclast Era *c.680–850*
M. T. G. Humphreys

Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century
Dimitri Korobeinikov

Writing and Reading Byzantine Secular Poetry, 1025–1081
Floris Bernard

The Byzantine-Islamic Transition in Palestine
An Archaeological Approach
Gideon Avni

Shaping a Muslim State
The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official
Petra M. Sijpesteijn

Symeon Stylites the Younger and Late Antique Antioch

From Hagiography to History

LUCY PARKER

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP,
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of
Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries

First Edition published in 2022

Impression: 1

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2021952671

ISBN 978–0–19–286517–5

DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780192865175.001.0001

Printed and bound in the UK by
TJ Books Limited

For my parents

Acknowledgements

This book began its life as an Oxford D.Phil. thesis. I am very grateful to the Arts and Humanities Research Council for funding my doctorate. I finished the book while working as a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow, still in Oxford, and would like to thank the British Academy for their support of my research. The book is therefore a product of the rich and stimulating environment of the History Faculty in Oxford. I am grateful to all the students and tutors in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies with whom I have discussed Byzantine religion over the years, and to David Taylor for inspiring tuition in Syriac. I cannot imagine a better place to have worked on this project. Of many debts, two stand out. I was first introduced to Byzantine history as an undergraduate student by the late Mark Whittow. Mark was a wonderfully engaging and kind tutor, and remained a source of support, wisdom, and good humour long after my student days. Like so many others, I miss him greatly. I am also very indebted to my supervisor, Phil Booth. Phil has been unfailingly generous and supportive to me, and his advice has greatly improved my work. Among many kindnesses, he took the time to teach me the basics of Coptic.

I am very grateful to everyone who has helped me in the process of converting my thesis into a monograph. My doctoral examiners, Averil Cameron and Vincent Déroche, gave me very helpful suggestions and constructive criticism; I greatly appreciate their support. After finishing my doctorate, I began working on the 'Stories of Survival' project in Oxford led by John-Paul Ghobrial. John-Paul has been a wonderful mentor and friend, and I have learned a great deal from him. I would also like to thank Elizabeth Jeffreys, who was very encouraging when I first considered publishing this book with Oxford Studies in Byzantium. I am very grateful to Charlotte Loveridge and Cathryn Steele, my editors, and to all the team at Oxford University Press for all their help throughout the process of publication.

I owe a great deal to the support of my friends and family. I cannot name them all here, but would especially like to thank Otone, my house mate throughout most of the time I worked on this project, for her unfailing friendship, support, and enthusiasm about stylites. It has been a joy to talk about history, religion, and the ancient world with Anastasia, Rosie, and Laura. My husband, Paul, has been a constant source of encouragement. We first met each other a few months before I finished my doctorate. Several years later, we were in Scotland on our

honeymoon when I found out that my book had been accepted by OUP! I am so grateful for the love and happiness that he has brought into my life.

My greatest debt is to my parents, Jo and Robert, for the support of all kinds which they have given me over the years. I could not have written this book without them, and I dedicate it to them with love and gratitude.

Contents

List of Figures

Note on Transliterations and Conventions

Any author of a book treating an area which used a range of languages faces difficult decisions in terms of transliteration conventions. I have tried to follow some clear principles, but, like the scribes of Syriac manuscripts, I beg the reader to forgive any mistakes. For names which have common English equivalents, I have used these (thus John not Ioannes/Yuḥanon, George not Georgios/Giwargis, Cyril not Kyrillos). When a name does not have a widely used English equivalent, I typically use a simplified Greek transliteration (Amantios, Dorotheos, Evagrios Scholastikos). I do, however, use a Latinized transliteration for authors who wrote in Latin (Marcellinus comes), for emperors (Tiberius and Heraclius), and for martyrs whose names are paired with common English names (thus Cosmas and Damian, not Kosmas and Damianos). For place names, I typically use the commonly known English version. For places with both Syriac/Arabic and Greek names, I use the name most widely used in scholarly literature. For obscure place names mentioned in hagiographies, I use a simplified transliteration from Greek.

In the main text of the monograph, I provide all quotations in English translation. If I have made the translation myself, or adapted it from a published translation, I provide the original-language quotation in the footnote, so that readers may check my translations. If I have quoted from a published translation, I do not provide the original language text, although I do provide a reference to the relevant edition as well as the translation. For the Bible, unless otherwise indicated quotations from the Old Testament are from the *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (Oxford, 2007), accessed online through http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/, which includes updates from 2009 and 2014; quotations from the New Testament are from *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, 4th edn (Oxford, 2010).

Abbreviations

ACO	E. Schwartz et al. (eds), *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* (Berlin, 1914–).
CPG	*Clavis Patrum Graecorum* (Turnhout, 1974–).
IGLS	*Les inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie* (Paris, 1929–).
NETS	A. Pietersma and B. G. Wright (eds), *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (Oxford, 2007).
NRSV	M. D. Coogan (ed.), *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, 4th edn (Oxford, 2010).
Pauly-Wissowa	A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, et al. (eds), *Pauly's Real-Encylopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart, 1894–1979).
PLRE	A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale, and J. Morris (eds), *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, 3 vols in 4 (Cambridge, 1971–92).
SEG	*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* (Leiden, 1923–).

Introduction

Shortly before the Persian sack of Antioch in 540, a local holy man received a troubling vision. This holy man, Symeon Stylites the Younger, was, according to his hagiographic Life, warned by God that He was angered by the sins of the Antiochenes and was planning to deliver them to the Persians. Symeon cried out to God, imploring Him to change His mind and spare the city. The hagiographer reports, however, that the saint received no response from God, because His anger was at its peak. Symeon then prayed again, fervently, and God provided an uncompromising reply:

> I will surrender the city and I will not hide from you what I am going to do. I will fill it with enemies and I will surrender the majority of those living in it to slaughter, and many of them will be led off as prisoners.[1]

Symeon could not change God's mind; destruction was unleashed on Antioch. The hagiographer continues to claim that Symeon was able to mitigate the damage wrought, and to protect some monks and prisoners who invoked his name, but his initial petition for God to spare Antioch went unheeded. This episode raises uncomfortable questions about the position of the holy man as an intercessor between God and his supplicants. Could a human, however holy, be expected to change the mind of God? How could he reconcile fulfilling his supplicants' desire for protection with his obedience to God's will? And, most strikingly, how would his supporters react to his failure to achieve protection for the community which he claimed to defend?

This is a book about the authority of the holy man and its limits in times of crisis. It investigates the tensions that emerged when increasingly ambitious claims about the powers of holy men came into conflict with undeniable evidence of their failures, and explores how holy men and their supporters responded to this. It takes as its central figure Symeon Stylites the Younger, who, from his vantage point on a column on a mountain close to Antioch, witnessed a period of exceptional turbulence in the local area. Symeon the Younger was born in Antioch

[1] *Παραδώσω τὴν πόλιν καὶ οὐ μὴ ἀποκρύψω ἀπὸ σοῦ ἃ μέλλω ποιεῖν. Πληρώσω γὰρ ταύτην ἐκ τῶν ὑπεναντίων καὶ παραδώσω τοὺς πλείονας τῶν κατοικούντων αὐτὴν ἐν σφαγῇ· πολλοὶ δὲ ἐξ αὐτῶν καὶ αἰχμάλωτοι ἀπαχθήσονται*: *Life of Symeon* 57 (p. 51).

Symeon Stylites the Younger and Late Antique Antioch: From Hagiography to History. Lucy Parker, Oxford University Press.
 DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780192865175.003.0001

in *c.*521.[2] According to Symeon's hagiographer, the saint's father, John, was the son of two perfume-sellers from Edessa. Symeon's mother, Martha, had desperately desired to remain a virgin but had to bow to her parents' wishes to marry John.[3] After her marriage, she supplicated John the Baptist to be granted a child to serve Christ; Symeon was born after this.[4] Symeon's sanctity was foreshadowed throughout his infancy: he would only drink, for example, from his mother's right breast, spurning the left (in an echo of Christ's division between the righteous sheep on his right and the sinful goats on his left).[5] When Symeon was five, an earthquake struck Antioch; one of the victims was the saint's father, John.[6] His life was thus marked from an early age by the disasters that afflicted sixth-century Antioch. Not long afterwards, a man in white appeared to Symeon and led him to a monastery in the mountains, led by another stylite, John. Symeon, now aged six, joined the monastery, and soon ascended a small column next to John's.[7] This was the start of an exceptional career.

The child saint received numerous visions from God, and surpassed the rest of the monastery in asceticism, provoking jealousy among the monks.[8] He soon began to perform miracles. Ephraim, the patriarch of Antioch, came to visit him and spread his fame within the city.[9] After some time, he moved onto a 40-foot-tall column, on which he stood for eight years.[10] He foresaw John's death, and seems, although the hagiographer never states this explicitly, to have taken over the monastery after this took place.[11] After John's death, Symeon redoubled his ascetic efforts, and performed yet more miracles. Indeed, most of his hagiographic Life consists of a vast array of miracle stories, with little clear narrative or chronological structure. But this is interspersed with several key events, some relating to Symeon's own career and monastery, some part of empire-wide events. Symeon, as we have seen, is said to have prophesied the Persian sack of Antioch by Khosrow I in 540.[12] In an ultimately unsuccessful effort to avoid his crowds of admirers, he relocated his monastery to the 'Wonderful Mountain' (so named by Christ in a vision), where he arranged for a new column and new monastic complex to be built (see Fig 0.1).[13] The base of this column still stands today (see Figs 0.2 and 0.3).

The plague, which afflicted the eastern empire in the early 540s, also affected Antioch and Symeon's own monastery; Symeon had to appeal to God to bring back one of his best-loved disciples, Konon, from death.[14] Symeon foresaw the death of Patriarch Ephraim and the succession of the wicked Domninos.[15] He

[2] The principal source for his biography is his hagiographic Life, on which see Chapter 3 below.
[3] *Life of Symeon* 1 (pp. 2–3). [4] Ibid. 2–3 (pp. 3–6).
[5] Ibid. 4 (pp. 6–7); cf. Matthew 25:31–46. [6] Ibid. 7 (p. 8). [7] Ibid. 10–13 (pp. 10–12).
[8] Ibid. 14–23 (pp. 12–19). [9] Ibid. 25 (pp. 21–2). [10] Ibid. 34 (p. 33).
[11] Ibid. 36 (pp. 34–6). [12] Ibid. 57–64 (pp. 50–6).
[13] Ibid. 65–7, 95–6, 112–13 (pp. 56–8, 73–4, 90–3). [14] Ibid. 69, 124–9 (pp. 59–60, 106–22).
[15] Ibid. 71–2 (pp. 60–3).

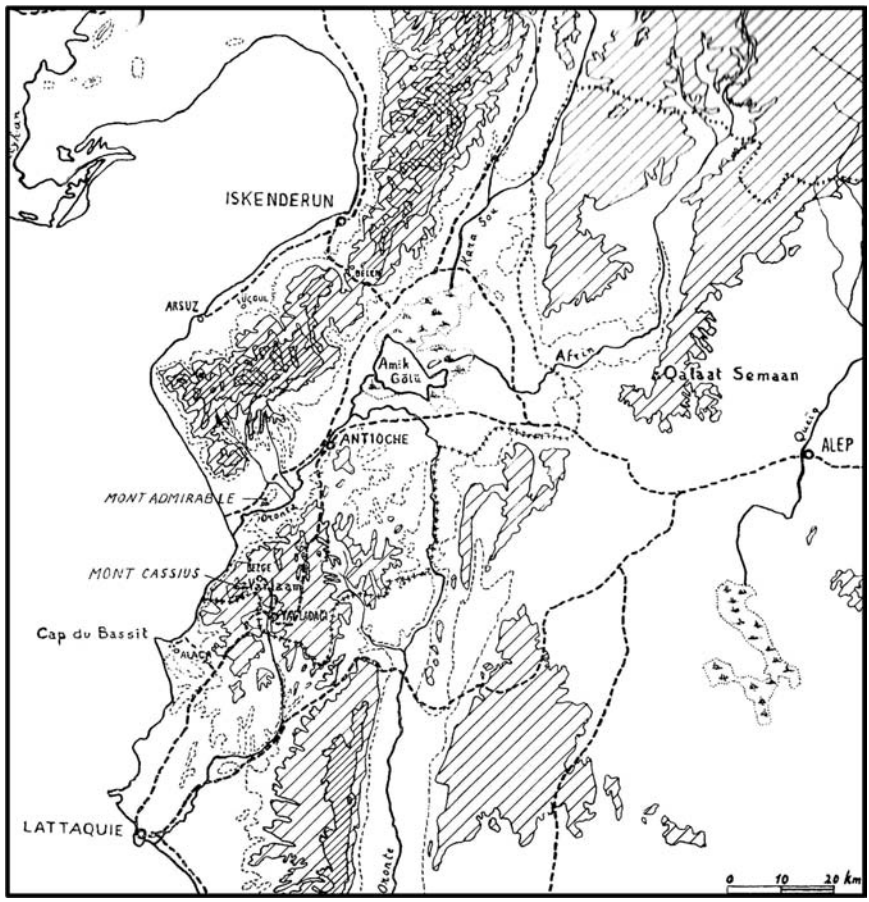


Fig. 0.1 Map showing the location of the 'Wonderful Mountain' (Mont Admirable), where Symeon the Younger's monastery was built, from Lafontaine-Dosogne 1967, pl. 1; reproduced with the permission of Peeters Publishers.

predicted further earthquakes which afflicted Antioch.[16] He was ordained as a priest (unlike his famous predecessor Symeon Stylites the Elder).[17] Justinian's agent Amantios came to Antioch in response to Symeon's prayer to punish the pagans and idolaters in Antioch.[18] Symeon foresaw the accession of Anastasios as patriarch of Antioch, of John Scholastikos as patriarch of Constantinople, and of Justin II as emperor.[19] He healed Justin II's daughter, but when the emperor himself fell ill he refused Symeon's advice to avoid wicked treatments and to entrust himself to God, and consequently turned mad.[20] This is the last clearly dateable episode in the *Life* until it recounts Symeon's own death in 592.

[16] Ibid. 78, 104–6 (pp. 66–8, 81–7). [17] Ibid. 132–5 (pp. 124–7).
[18] Ibid. 160–5 (pp. 141–8). [19] Ibid. 202–6 (pp. 176–8). [20] Ibid. 207–11 (pp. 178–81).

Fig. 0.2 The remaining base of Symeon's column on the 'Wonderful Mountain'. Photograph taken by the author in 2011.

This brief summary is enough to show that Symeon's life was of exceptional historical interest. It spanned most of the sixth century, a century which has been the subject of intense historiographical debate, seen sometimes as the end of antiquity, sometimes as the start of Byzantium.[21] The reign of the emperor Justinian (527–65) was traditionally seen as a last golden age for the eastern Roman empire; recent studies, however, have depicted it as a time of rising social tensions and economic disparities, of *Kaiserkritik*, religious dissent, and increasing eschatological fears.[22] Others have seen the later sixth century as a time of ideological change: of governments adopting an increasingly religious tone and becoming ever more reliant on saints' cults, with, perhaps, a concomitant increase in scepticism towards the cult of saints.[23] All of these debates take place with an eye towards the military disasters of the seventh century: was the empire fundamentally weakened or riven with tensions that made it more vulnerable to devastation first by the Persian armies and, subsequently and permanently, by the new forces of Islam? Late antiquity as a field of study has sometimes been

[21] Allen and Jeffreys 1996; A. M. Cameron 2016, esp. pp. 28–32.

[22] Social tensions: Sarris 2006; Bell 2013; dissent and eschatology: Meier 2003.

[23] A. M. Cameron 1979 is a classic study of the increasingly religious tone of government in the later sixth century, although she has somewhat stepped away from this argument recently. For scepticism towards saints' cults in this period, see Dal Santo 2012.

criticized for seeming to deny the possibility of any form of decline or catastrophe; scholars have recently pushed back against this with a renewed interest in crisis in multiple forms.[24] Symeon's life offers a new perspective on the religious and social developments of the sixth century, especially in the region of Antioch. Hagiography, more perhaps than other sources, can offer exceptional insights into living debates within society around questions of religious belief, theodicy, and the role of saints within the empire. This does, however, present a methodological challenge: how to write history from a body of materials largely concerned with glorifying the reputation of an exceptional individual, around whom legendary material accumulated rapidly?

This book seeks to explore the relationship between saints and society; between hagiography and history. Holy men have provided a topic of great interest for late antique historians since Peter Brown's ground-breaking article of 1971 on the rise and function of the holy man. In 1971 Brown famously portrayed the holy man in anthropological terms as a mediator and patron within society; historians have subsequently uncovered various other roles played by holy men and women, from 'commander', to 'teacher', to 'intercessor', and combatant with demons.[25] Brown himself has shifted his emphasis from his original article, proposing various other ways of understanding the holy man, including as 'exemplar' and as 'arbiter of the holy'.[26] Others have emphasized the diverse behaviours of holy men, suggesting that we should not attempt to generalize about their roles at all.[27] All of these approaches are fundamentally historical, seeking to uncover the reality of the lives and behaviours of holy men. But there is always a certain methodological tension that inevitably affects historical studies of hagiography and saints' cults. The problem, of course, is that hagiography is *not* history, in the sense of quasi-objective modern historiography.[28] It is very difficult to untangle the complex relationship between holy men, their cults, and their hagiographers. Since Brown's original article, it has become very apparent that saints' Lives cannot be read as straightforward, accurate reports of the lives of holy men or women, even when stripped of their more fantastic elements: hagiographers selected and shaped their material to fulfil a wide range of purposes, from the panegyrical to the personal and political.[29] Some holy men may have been entirely fictitious (although their Lives could still, of course, convey spiritual truths); many probably existed, but

[24] For critical surveys of the concept of and historiographical approaches towards 'late antiquity', see e.g. Bowersock 1996; James 2008; Marcone 2008. For recent studies exploring crisis in later late antiquity, see e.g. Meier 2003; Allen and Neil 2013; Booth 2014.

[25] For the holy man as commander, see Lane Fox 1997; for the role of teacher, Rousseau 1999b; for the holy man as intercessor, Rapp 1999; for the saint as combatant with demons, Brakke 2006.

[26] See e.g. Brown 1983, 1995. [27] Whitby 1987.

[28] Lifschitz 1994 argues that the distinction between hagiography and historiography is an artificial one created in the nineteenth century and inapplicable to earlier centuries.

[29] See e.g. the articles gathered in Howard-Johnston and Hayward 1999, especially those by A. M. Cameron, Rousseau, Rapp, and Magdalino.

this does not mean that the majority of material found in their *vitae* is historically accurate.[30] Literary approaches to hagiography have proliferated in scholarship, revealing further aspects of hagiographers' rhetorical techniques.[31] The concept of a genre of 'hagiography', which encompasses texts of a variety of forms, including biographic Lives, miracle collections, accounts of martyrdoms, collections of sayings, and homilies, has itself been called into question.[32]

Even if a historian abandons the ambition to assess the historicity of the Life of a holy man and decides to focus instead on his cult and posthumous representations, the relationship between hagiography and cult remains complicated. Hagiography (whether in the form of a saint's Life or a collection of miracles) *creates* a particular vision of a saint and his or her cult. This vision does not necessarily reflect a generally accepted interpretation of the saint, who could mean very different things to different people. Nor does it always represent the 'official' ideology of a cult, insofar as such an ideology ever existed. This is perhaps most strikingly demonstrated by the fifth-century *Miracles of Thekla*: the work was written by a maverick ex-member of the clergy at her shrine at Seleucia in Isauria who had been excommunicated by local bishops.[33] But a whole host of examples could be adduced to show that hagiography often represents the interests of a particular individual, or group, rather than all of a cult's devotees. The several Lives of the fifth-century stylite Symeon the Elder differ, sometimes significantly, in their accounts of his life and in particular his death; these differences seem to reflect the diverse interests of rival groups associated with his cult.[34] The two surviving miracle collections relating to the cult of Cyrus and John at Menouthis, one written by the educated monk and future patriarch of Jerusalem, Sophronios, and the other by an anonymous, possibly non-clerical, devotee of the martyrs' shrine, present drastically different visions of proper cultic practice, of the requirements for supplicants, and of salvation.[35]

Several saints' Lives produced in monastic communities were written in the context of internal controversy, often relating to events following the death of the holy man. The Bohairic *Life of Pachomios*, for example, seems to have been

[30] On the relationship between reality, truth as understood by the Byzantines, and fiction, see Kaldellis 2014a, esp. pp. 116–18.

[31] For a recent statement of hagiography's literary worth, see the articles collected in Efthymiadis 2014a.

[32] See e.g. Van Uytfanghe 1993, 2011; Lifschitz 1994; Rapp 1999. For a summary of the debate, see Efthymiadis 2014c, esp. pp. 8–9.

[33] On the text's author, see Dagron 1978, pp. 13–16. On the *Miracles* as a whole, see also Johnson 2006b. On Thekla's cult, see Davis 2001.

[34] No consensus has, however, been reached on which precise groups the different texts were associated with. Bernard Flusin argued that the Syriac *Life* was written by the saint's monastic disciples at Telneshe, whereas the Greek *Life* by 'Antonios' was probably associated with a relic cult of the saint at Antioch (Flusin 1993). Dina Boero has recently argued that the Syriac *Life* originated not among Symeon's disciples at Telneshe, but at a church there, and represents clerical interests (Boero 2015).

[35] The anonymous collection is edited and discussed by Déroche 2012; see also, on Sophronios's collection, Booth 2014, pp. 44–89.

intended in part to defend Theodore, a monk in Pachomios's monastery at Pbow who later became leader of the Pachomian confederation in very controversial circumstances.[36] The whole account of Pachomios's life is bound up with that of Theodore's, and appears highly partisan: it is difficult to believe that this emphasis would have been accepted by all members of the Pachomian confederation. Hagiographic texts thus embody a range of more or less particular interests, which do not necessarily represent those of most devotees of the cult of the saint in question. This point should not perhaps be pushed too far: even if rival factions might have interpreted particular aspects of a saint's career very differently, it is likely that they would all have shared some common 'memories' of his or her achievements, which are reflected in hagiography. Nonetheless, it is clearly of critical importance to establish, as far as possible, when, why, and by whom any given hagiography was written.

How, then, is the historian to tackle the problem of disentangling the saint as historical figure, from his posthumous cult, and from the version of him represented in a hagiographic text? One option is to avoid the pitfalls of hagiography by focusing on other sources relating to holy men, including letters and sermons. Powerful studies have been produced on, for example, the letter collection of the sixth-century Palestinian holy men Barsanouphios and John, and the various writings of the famous fifth-century Egyptian hegumen Shenoute of Atripe.[37] Little such evidence survives relating to stylites, but Dina Boero has recently discussed the few letters attributed to Symeon the Elder.[38] A contrasting approach to the problem of historicity is, in a sense, to discount it: to focus only on the reality of the hagiographic text, rather than trying to relate it to any real historical events or persons. This can be a very fruitful approach, and is often necessary, especially when dealing with Lives of saints which are almost certainly entirely fictitious.[39] To my mind, however, it is not entirely satisfactory when examining saints' Lives that do demonstrably bear some relationship to real historical events and persons, particularly if they were written for audiences who would have had some knowledge of the historical saint. Even if a historian is interested in the hagiographer and his construction of the holy man rather than in the holy man himself, it is only possible to analyse fully the work of the former through an awareness of how far he is constrained by real events and how and why he may have distorted his account of the saint's life. While the recent emphasis on the

[36] For a discussion of Theodore's relationship with Pachomios (although one which perhaps underestimates the unreliability of the literary sources), see Rousseau 1999a, pp. 178–91.

[37] On Barsanouphios and John, see Hevelone-Harper 2005, and, looking at various letter collections, Rapp 1999, pp. 63–81. On Shenoute, see e.g. Schroeder 2007; López 2013. Unlike Barsanouphios and John, Shenoute has been immortalized in hagiography, but both Schroeder and López prioritize his own writings. For further examples of studies based on holy men's own prose, see below pp. 55–6.

[38] Boero 2015b, pp. 54–74.

[39] This is the approach adopted by e.g. Derek Krueger, in his study of Leontios of Neapolis's *Life of Symeon the Holy Fool* (Krueger 1996, p. 6).

'literary' qualities of hagiography is to be welcomed, hagiography is a form of literature which, perhaps more than most, cannot be dissociated from society and historical events, particularly given how often it is polemically or apologetically motivated.

The problem then remains, of course, of how to establish the relationship between hagiography and historical events. When other sources are available for comparison, the task becomes easier, but often this is not the case. Unfortunately, it is not possible to accept a hagiographic narrative on the grounds that it appears plausible: the divergent accounts of the death of Symeon Stylites the Elder all seem, independently, reasonably coherent and realistic, but they clearly cannot all be true.[40] Nonetheless, there are elements in hagiography which I believe can be taken, with reasonable confidence, to relate in some sense to actual events. In particular, it is likely that pressure points—that is to say moments of significant tension or opposition to the saint or his cult, which go beyond mere hagiographic stereotype—must in most cases reflect real instances of trouble, even if they are often recounted in highly misleading terms. It is not uncommon for hagiography to contain elements of apologetic, which would be unnecessary were they not a response to actual controversy and a reflection of genuine concerns about maintaining a saint's reputation. It may therefore be possible, with care, to isolate moments in texts in which hagiography and history draw particularly close. This is certainly not to suggest a return to the approach of extracting 'historical nuggets' from hagiography. Rather, it is to emphasize that a hagiographer's literary strategies (from the structuring of the text to the use of biblical typologies) are often a response to historical *realia* and that the one cannot be understood without the other.[41]

There are other ways, too, of writing history from hagiography. One productive approach is to look at hagiography comparatively and systematically, and to trace developments in the genre over time. If a development can be noted across numerous texts of a similar chronological period, this must relate to some ideological or societal change. The modern study of hagiography and holy men has, however, too often adopted a synchronic approach: one flaw, for example, in Brown's indisputably brilliant work is that he tends to speak interchangeably of holy men from the fourth to sixth/seventh centuries, without questioning whether their roles remained the same despite undeniable changes in the societies in which they lived.[42] It is, rather, necessary to adopt a diachronic approach, since evolving

[40] See Lane Fox 1997, pp. 181–5; Magdalino 1999, pp. 83–4. On the different versions of the Lives of Symeon, see above p. 6, and Harvey 1998.

[41] As is evidently the case in e.g. the sixth-century *Life of Eutychios* by Eustratios Presbyter, powerfully analysed in A. M. Cameron 1988 and 1990.

[42] Holy men discussed in Brown's original article of 1971 include Antony (fourth century), Symeon Stylites the Elder, Daniel the Stylite, Hypatios (all fifth century), Sabas (sixth century), and Theodore of Sykeon (sixth–seventh centuries). He does acknowledge that the characteristic 'holy man' emerged at different times in different regions.

opportunities and pressures within a changing society had a determinative impact both on holy men's careers and on how they were presented by their biographers; hagiography was never a static literary form.

There have been few surveys of hagiography across late antiquity, although it is difficult to know whether this is a cause or an effect of this dominant synchronic perspective.[43] Recently, however, several important studies have emphasized the need to situate hagiography in its precise context, and shown that developments in hagiography relate to wider social, political, and ideological trends. Thus Phil Booth analyses the developing role of the sacraments in late antique hagiography, arguing that this was linked both to the growing dissociation of the anti-Chalcedonians from the imperial church and, at least in some circles, to the political and military crises of the seventh century.[44] Matthew Dal Santo has shown that hagiographic sources produced in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, in both east and west, were characterized by signs of dissent and scepticism, particularly about the possibility of posthumous intercession by saints; he suggests that this was related to criticisms of the Byzantine emperors, and more generally to the political and economic tensions of the period.[45] There is still, however, much work to be done in assessing processes of change in late antique hagiography.

Dal Santo's book also reflects another important development in studies of holy men: the realization that many Byzantines did not accept the claims made about some (or all) saints' miracle-working powers and spiritual authority, on a wide range of grounds.[46] The ubiquity of references to scepticism about saints, which had earlier been highlighted in an important article by Gilbert Dagron, has also been emphasized recently by Antony Kaldellis.[47] From a different direction, Mischa Meier, in his monumental work on responses to disasters in the reign of Justinian, has argued that crises in this period caused severe damage to holy men's reputations.[48] The insights of all these scholars have profoundly changed the way we understand Byzantine hagiography and holy men. There remains considerable scope, however, to build on this work. There is, for instance, a need for more detailed studies of individual holy men, to assess how the particular context of their careers shaped their opportunities and the challenges they faced, and for literary-historical analyses of hagiographies, to show how their authors attempted to deal with scepticism. And much analysis remains to be done of the

[43] One exception is Barnes 2010, but in general he analyses his selection of texts sequentially, rather than comparatively. Another important recent exception is Bartlett 2013.

[44] Booth 2014, passim (esp. ch. 1). [45] Dal Santo 2012.

[46] See also the various essays collected in Sarris, Dal Santo, and Booth 2011.

[47] Dagron 1992; Kaldellis 2014b. Other scholars to allude to signs of doubt surrounding saints and their miracles include Marie-France Auzépy (Auzépy 1995) and Peter Brown (Brown 1995, esp. pp. 72–3), although, as Booth notes, the latter implies that ultimately holy men managed to conquer scepticism and achieve harmony (Booth 2011, p. 128 n. 48).

[48] Meier 2003, esp. pp. 354–5, 415–21, 426, 543–5, 555.

development of hagiography across late antiquity, to show how particular trends created both possibilities and pitfalls for saints and their devotees.

These questions are at the heart of this book. Its primary focus is the cult of the holy man Symeon Stylites the Younger. The surviving material related to Symeon the Younger is abundant, and has received uneven scholarly attention.[49] This evidence includes a letter, a theological quotation, and thirty sermons attributed to Symeon himself; his lengthy saint's Life, summarized above, which appears to have been written by a member of his monastery shortly after his death; a further hagiographic Life of his mother, Martha; several other references to Symeon in contemporary and near-contemporary sources, including the *Ecclesiastical History* of Evagrios Scholastikos and the *Spiritual Meadow* of John Moschos; and the physical remains of his monastery and cult objects associated with it (see Figs 0.3, 0.4 and 0.5, as well as 0.2 above).[50]

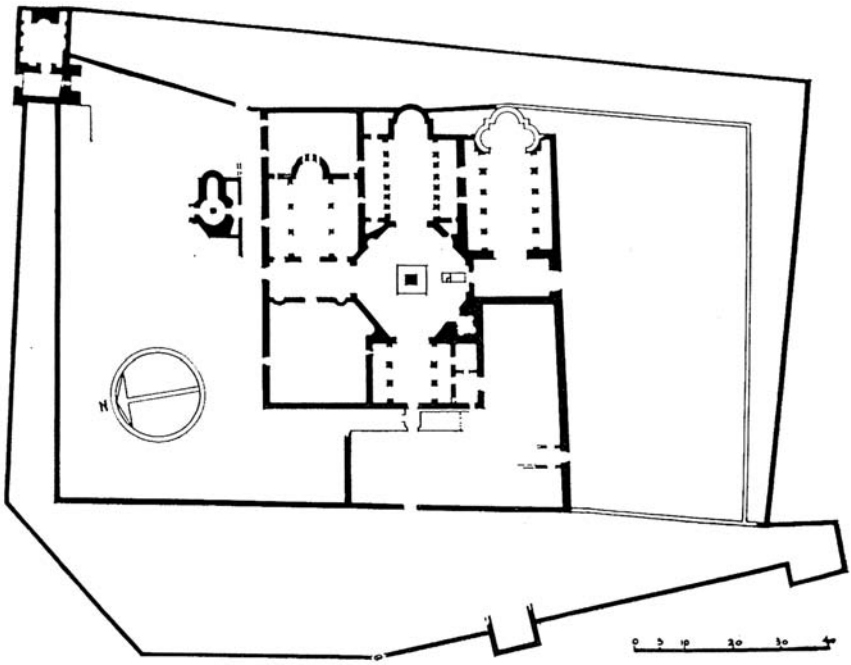
Two of the Georgian *Lives of the Thirteen Syrian Fathers* claim that their heroes had contacts with Symeon (in a reflection of the strong connections established between Symeon's cult and Iberia). The dating of these texts is uncertain, and most in their surviving versions are probably a product of the tenth century at earliest; nonetheless, some scholars think that the *Lives* have sixth-/seventh-century cores.[51] There is also a significant body of later Byzantine and eastern Christian material associated with the saint and his monastery.[52] Many of these sources have been almost totally neglected in modern scholarship;

[49] A useful introduction to the textual and literary materials associated with Symeon's cult has recently been published by Boero and Kuper 2020.

[50] Texts attributed to Symeon: Symeon Stylites the Younger, 'Letter to Justin II' (see pp. 111–12 below); *Monothelite Florilegium* (see pp. 130–1 below); for the sermons, see Chapter 2 below. For the *Life of Symeon* and the *Life of Martha*, see Chapters 3–4 below. Other near-contemporary references: Evagrios Scholastikos 5.21 (p. 217), 6.23 (pp. 238–40); John Moschos, *Spiritual Meadow* 96 (cols 2953–6), 117–18 (cols 2981–4). On Symeon's monastery, see Lafontaine-Dosogne 1967, pp. 67–135; Djobadze 1986, pp. 57–115, 204–5; and for an important new study Henry 2015, with Belgin-Henry 2018, 2019; on cult objects linked to Symeon's cult, see esp. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1967, pp. 140–58, 169–96; Vikan 1984, pp. 67–74; Volbach 1996.

[51] Symeon the Younger is mentioned in the *Life of Abibos Nekreseli* 2 (pp. 77–8). The dating of this text is not certain, but for an argument that it was written in the seventh century, see Martin-Hisard 1985–6, I, pp. 164–5. Symeon also appears in the *Life of Shio Mgvilemi*: for the relevant quote, see Loosley Leeming 2019, p. 65. Unfortunately, I have not been able to consult these texts because I do not know Georgian, but for useful English summaries, including discussion of the complex textual history of the Lives of the Fathers, see Loosley Leeming 2018, 2019; Matitashvili 2018 (reference to Symeon on p. 20). On links between Symeon's cult and Iberia, see Van den Ven 1962, pp. 53*–71*, 160*–2*, 216*–21*; Martin-Hisard 2006–7, pp. 128–9, 159–61; Loosley Leeming 2018, esp. ch. 4. Iberians play a prominent role in the later part of the *Life of Martha* (54–70, pp. 298–312). Peeters 1950, pp. 161–2, argued that Martha's Life was actually written in Georgian rather than Greek (several manuscripts of a Georgian version of the text survive), but this is highly implausible, as shown by Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 68*–77*; II, 250*–1*.

[52] See for an introduction to this material Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 214*–21*, and for a study of literary production at Symeon's monastery in the eleventh century, Glynias 2020.



a. PLAN DU MONASTÈRE ET DES ÉGLISES DE SAINT-SYMÉON, D'APRÈS LE P. MÉCÉRIAN

Fig. 0.3 Plan of Symeon's monastery on the 'Wonderful Mountain', with his column in the centre, from Van den Ven 1962–70, pl. 1a; reproduced by permission of the Société des Bollandistes, Brussels.

most notably, the sermon collection and the *Life of Martha* have never been translated into a modern language.[53]

This book seeks to make a major contribution to the study of Symeon's cult. It provides a new perspective on Symeon's relationship with Antioch, it presents a historically-informed analysis of the literary sources associated with the saint, and it makes accessible some materials—in particular his sermon collection and the *Life of Martha*—which have hitherto been little used by late antique historians. It does not offer a comprehensive study of the stylite's cult; it focuses primarily on the literary evidence, only occasionally referring to the archaeological material, which remains in need of further specialist study. Rather than synthesizing all the surviving evidence, it uses three key texts associated with Symeon—his sermon collection, his Life, and the Life of his mother Martha—to uncover a new perspective on the holy man, exploring the limits of his authority in times of crisis. It seeks to embed the study of the saint in the study of his environment:

[53] I am now preparing an English translation of the Lives of Symeon and Martha for the Liverpool Translated Texts for Historians series; Charles Kuper is preparing a translation of the *Life of Martha*.

Fig. 0.4 The remains of the baptistery on the 'Wonderful Mountain'. Photograph taken by the author in 2011.

sixth-century Antioch and the natural and military disasters that it faced. It uses Symeon's life as an entry point into exploring ideological responses to crisis in the sixth- and seventh-century Roman east. In a sense, the book is a study less of a particular saint's cult over time than it is of a historical moment, when increasingly high expectations of holy men came into conflict with undeniable evidence of disaster and failure.

Any holy man's career, and cult, can only be understood in its precise social, economic, political, and religious context: the first chapter therefore introduces Antioch and northern Syria in the sixth century, exploring the series of disasters which hit the city during Symeon's lifetime. It addresses the scholarly debate about the state of the Roman empire in this period, arguing that the severity (or otherwise) of the economic and practical consequences of disasters did not necessarily correlate to the scale of their cultural, psychological, and ideological ramifications. After this, the main body of the book analyses three key texts associated with the cult. Chapter 2 discusses the sermon collection attributed to Symeon, which sheds light on how a holy man could construct his own spiritual authority. Whereas Symeon's hagiographer presents his healing miracles as the basis of his popularity, the sermons reveal the power of the stylite's own rhetoric: starkly polarized in his thought, he eschews the compromises adopted by many

Fig. 0.5 A column capital on the 'Wonderful Mountain'. Photograph taken by the author in 2011.

clerical preachers, focusing on the opposition of demon and monk, rich and poor, and heaven and hell. Although the sermons are shorn of specific references to their social context, they do suggest that Symeon at times played a divisive role in society, exploiting social tensions to increase his authority. In particular, Symeon's sermons are extremely hostile to the wealthy, going so far as to associate wealth with paganism, a theme which recurs in other texts associated with the stylite.

Chapter 3 examines the *Life of Symeon the Younger*, which shows how the recently deceased leader was memorialized by his disciples to perpetuate his cult posthumously and, particularly interestingly, how they dealt with controversial aspects of his career. It argues that at one level the *Life* can be read as an extended *apologia* for Symeon's failure to protect Antioch and its environs from the natural and military disasters of the sixth century. The hagiographer adopts various biblical models to attempt to exculpate Symeon of accusations of failure, but the difficulty of the situation leads him into inconsistencies and problematic theological claims. He also adopts a more aggressive approach, finding scapegoats to blame for the disasters: in particular, he targets the rich of Antioch, whom he depicts as sinful pagans. Chapter 4 addresses the *Life of Martha*, in which a new saint, the stylite's mother, is created for the cult, revealing its continued need for

development in the seventh century. The *Life* contains signs that the promotion of Martha's cult was controversial, perhaps because of her exceptional position as the mother of an ascetic holy man. I argue that the promotion of Martha's cult was intimately bound up with the desire to encourage liturgical participation at the shrine. Thus her Life contains an original and inclusive vision of holiness, which eschews most traditional emphases of the Lives of female saints, such as celibacy and asceticism, focusing instead on the redemptive powers of liturgy and the sacraments. Martha's hagiographer also steers clear of most of the polemical and apologetic themes so prominent in the *Life of Symeon*. He adopts a different approach to the challenges facing saints in this period of crisis, avoiding more ambitious claims about his subject's miracle-working powers, and moving the responsibility for successful miracles away from the exceptional powers of holy figures towards the proper ritual and cultic behaviour of supplicants.

Chapter 5 takes a step back and situates the Lives of Symeon and Martha in the context of broader hagiographical trends in the sixth and seventh centuries. Symeon's hagiographer's struggles to justify disasters are echoed in other near-contemporary saints' Lives, including those of Nicholas of Sion, George of Choziba, and Theodore of Sykeon. I argue that holy men had by this period become particularly prone to accusations of failure in times of crisis because of ideological developments across late antiquity: in particular, growing claims about the thaumaturgic powers of saints and the increasing association between holy men and the empire. The *Life of Martha* reflects a different, but possibly complementary, development in hagiography: the emergence of posthumous miracle collections which, with the important exception of the *Miracles of St Demetrios*, do not describe extravagant miracles performed for the benefit of large groups of people but instead include only small-scale miracles (almost always healing miracles) which help only one or two people. In these collections, the onus for performing the miracle tends to be shifted away from the saint and onto the supplicant; a miracle will only take place, usually, if the supplicant fulfils various preconditions, be they practical or spiritual. This narrower focus, as well as this change of emphasis, was certainly suitable for a time when the more ambitious claims of many living holy men's hagiographers had been called into question by plague, earthquakes, and conquest. Taken together, these sources have considerable implications for scholarly understandings of the social position of the holy man, of Christian attitudes to theodicy, and of the state of the Byzantine empire in the sixth and seventh centuries.

This book thus takes hagiography seriously as a genre that is both literary and deeply historically embedded. It is committed to exploring new ways of writing history from hagiography. It presents the first detailed study of the unusually extensive literary material relating to an important late antique holy man, Symeon the Younger. It examines not only the *Life of Symeon*, a text which has received limited scholarly attention, but also the stylite's sermon collection and the *Life of*

Martha, both of which have been almost totally neglected. It provides a new reading of these texts, arguing that while Symeon's sermons and Life offer an aggressive approach to dealing with the saint's critics, the *Life of Martha* reveals a reorientation for Symeon's cult in the seventh century. It argues that this process reflected wider changes in approaches to the holiness in the late sixth and seventh centuries, as a result both of long-term religious developments and of the particular circumstances of this momentous period in eastern Roman history. It thus seeks to contribute to a diachronic understanding of the holy in late antiquity: to show how holiness evolved with the society that conceived it.

1
Antioch and Northern Syria in the Sixth Century

Northern Syria contained some of the greatest cities of the Roman empire. Most notably, Antioch, situated on the Orontes River less than 20 kilometres from the Mediterranean, played a prominent role in the political, cultural, and economic life of the region. Late antique Antioch has been the subject of considerable scholarly attention. Most studies, however, have focused on the fourth century, as this period is richly attested through the voluminous works of two of the most famous late antique Antiochenes: the pagan orator Libanios and the Christian bishop John Chrysostom. Various recent works have drawn upon these sources to explore Antiochene religious culture and identities.[1] In contrast, later periods of Antiochene history have been relatively neglected. There is a scholarly need for a history of Antioch in the sixth and seventh centuries, beyond the narrative presented in Glanville Downey's classic monograph.[2] This book will contribute towards this goal, alongside the studies of other scholars who have worked on sixth-century Antioch, such as Pauline Allen, Wendy Mayer, and Lee Mordechai.[3]

The dearth of work on this later period is largely due to the perception that there is a lack of surviving evidence.[4] Yet sixth-century Antioch, at least, is hardly bereft of interesting source material. The renowned miaphysite leader Severos, patriarch of Antioch from 512 to 518, does not fall short of Libanios and Chrysostom in terms of his historical significance—or in his literary prolificacy. Admittedly, Severos was only based in Antioch for a brief period, and many of his extant works are not focused on the city, but several of his letters, as well as his extensive Cathedral Homilies, do deal with Antioch, and remain, despite a few important studies, underexploited by historians.[5] Two key sixth-century historiographical sources were also produced in Antioch, and have a strongly local focus:

[1] See e.g. Maxwell 2006; Soler 2006; Cribiore 2007; Sandwell 2007; and Shephardson 2014.
[2] Downey 1961.
[3] See esp. Allen 1981; Mayer 2009; Mayer and Allen 2012; Mordechai 2019. Mordechai's work focuses primarily on the archaeological and scientific evidence; he does consider textual material, but rather fleetingly (cf. the comment on p. 208 which dismisses literary sources for the period other than Prokopios and John Malalas).
[4] See e.g. Liebeschuetz 1972, p. 259; Shephardson 2014, p. 252.
[5] Exceptions include esp. Alpi 2009; see also Allen 1996; Allen and Hayward 2004.

Symeon Stylites the Younger and Late Antique Antioch: From Hagiography to History. Lucy Parker, Oxford University Press.
 DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780192865175.003.0002

the *Chronicle* of John Malalas, and the *Ecclesiastical History* of Evagrios Scholastikos.[6] Major events in Antioch were also recorded by historians across the empire, including Prokopios, Zacharias of Mytilene, and John of Ephesus. Other insights into Antiochene society in this period come from a diverse range of sources associated with the city, from the homilies and letters of its other patriarchs to the *Life of Symeon the Younger* itself.[7] There are undoubtedly gaps in the extant source material: as discussed below, archaeological evidence is particularly lacking. The written sources illuminate some events and themes, such as the activities of the city's bishops, much more clearly than others. The countryside surrounding Antioch—including the area where Symeon the Younger's monastery was situated—is less well served by the evidence than the city itself. Nonetheless, enough survives to enable a discussion of many key aspects of the region's history.

This chapter will consider three key contested themes in the sixth-century history of the city and its environs. First, it will examine natural and military disasters and their significance. Archaeological evidence provides important nuance to the picture of crisis given by the textual sources; nonetheless, Antioch and its surrounding countryside do seem to have experienced exceptional difficulties in the sixth century. Second, it will consider social and economic tensions, arguing that, while there is no firm evidence of heightening social divisions in this period, latent socio-economic tensions were widespread and could break into the open in times of crisis. Third, it will consider religious and cultural relations, arguing that Christian communities in Antioch were fractured as much by tensions and disagreement over proper Christian identity and attitudes towards the pagan past as they were by Christological divisions. Explosive conflicts over paganism in sixth-century Antioch reveal the potency of these debates and indicate that cultural conflicts were intimately linked with, but did not directly correlate to, economic and social tensions. All these themes will be contextualized in terms of broader debates about the sixth-century eastern empire. Yet the focus throughout will be on a detailed analysis of the evidence from northern Syria itself, as it is unsafe to generalize from material from other regions and to assume that patterns were consistent across the Byzantine east.[8]

[6] On Malalas, see esp. the articles collected in Croke, Jeffreys, and Scott 1990; Liebeschuetz 2004; on Evagrios, see above all Allen 1981; Whitby 2000; with Caires 1982; Whitby 1998.

[7] For full references to the surviving works/fragments of the sixth-century Antiochene patriarchs, see *CPG* III, 6902–16 (pp. 306–9) for Ephraim; 6944–69 (pp. 313–19) for Anastasios; and 7384–94 (pp. 383–5) for Gregory.

[8] For the need to recognize that even nearby settlements could experience very different patterns of economic development, see e.g. Horden and Purcell 2000, p. 53; Liebeschuetz 2001a, p. 5; Stathakopoulos 2007, p. 117; and for a slightly later period, Haldon 2012, p. 121.

Disasters in Antioch: A City in Decline?

The traditional narrative of Antioch's fate in the sixth century is one of decline. Literary sources relate that the city was smitten by a procession of devastating disasters including fire in 525, severe earthquakes in 526 and 528, a sack by the Persians in 540, the plague from 542 (with repeated recurrences later in the century), and further earthquakes in the 550s, 577, and 588.[9] Much modern scholarship, heavily reliant on these texts, has continued this picture of crisis: thus Downey wrote that the Persian sack in 540 'brought the real greatness of Antioch to a close'.[10] Even historians who have argued that near eastern cities remained prosperous throughout the sixth century have often viewed Antioch as an exception.[11] Recently, however, attempts have been made to revise the common picture of sixth-century Antioch, on the grounds that archaeology suggests that the city remained prosperous well into the seventh century.[12] This chapter will address the question of decline directly, first looking at the picture of crisis painted in the literary sources, before comparing this to the impression gained from the archaeological evidence from the city and the nearby countryside. It will suggest that, rather than contradicting the literary sources, the archaeological evidence provides limited support for their picture of difficulties in Antioch, while encouraging the historian to adopt a nuanced approach to exploring the effects of disasters. Archaeologists have recently proposed new models for understanding disasters that shift scholarly emphasis away from establishing any straightforward objective measure of the severity of a disaster towards understanding societal reactions to disasters and their diverse effects. Effects could vary greatly between different areas of the city and between different social groups, while, importantly, cultural, psychological, and ideological developments did not necessarily correspond exactly to economic conditions.

The Literary Evidence

Symeon the Younger's birth, in *c.*521, coincided, approximately, with the beginning of Antioch's age of insecurity. Although the previous decade had seen political and ecclesiastical instability, with a rapid turnover of patriarchs of different Christological opinions, it was only in the 520s that serious disaster struck.[13] In 525, during the patriarchate of the Palestinian Chalcedonian

[9] For a list of disasters affecting Antioch in this period, see Mordechai 2019, pp. 207–8.
[10] Downey 1961, p. 527. For his narrative of the sixth-century disasters, see ibid. pp. 503–74.
[11] Foss 1997, p. 259; Wickham 2005, p. 623; Walmsley 2007a, p. 37, 2007b, pp. 334–5.
[12] See esp. Magness 2003, pp. 206–9. Cf. also Mayer and Allen 2012, pp. 11–13.
[13] The following narrative focuses only on the events which make most impression in the sources; for a more detailed account, see Downey 1961, pp. 503–74.

Euphrasios, a severe fire broke out in the city, outbreaks of which seem to have recurred for months.[14] The fire is presented in the sources as damaging in itself but also as God's warning of the worse crises that were to come: thus John Malalas (whose account of the fire underlies most later descriptions) reports 'this conflagration foretold God's coming displeasure . . . many houses were burned and many lives lost and no one could discover the source of the fire'.[15] 'God's displeasure' manifested itself in full in the next year, 526, in the form of a devastating earthquake.[16] Malalas again provides a vivid description of the destruction caused by the quake:

> The surface of the earth boiled *and blazed*, *setting fire to everything*, and foundations of buildings were struck by thunderbolts thrown up by the earthquakes and were burned to ashes by fire, so that even those who fled were met by flames, *like those who remained in their houses* . . . . As a result *Christ-loving* Antioch became desolate . . . for nothing remained apart from some buildings beside the mountain. No holy chapel nor monastery nor any other holy place remained which had not been torn apart.[17]

The chronicler continues to describe the human effects of the disasters, stating that the victims included many visitors who had come to the city for the feast of the Ascension, as well as the patriarch, Euphrasios. Although he notes that God miraculously saved from death some of those who had been buried in the earthquake, including pregnant women and young children, he claims that the death toll was extremely high: 250,000 victims.[18]

As Malalas continues to report, the emperors dedicated considerable resources to the reconstruction of Antioch after this crisis. But disaster soon struck again, in 528, when the city was hit by another severe earthquake.[19] Although the death toll was apparently much lower than in 526 (only 5,000 lives), the physical damage to

[14] See Pseudo-Dionysios (II, p. 20); Theophanes, AM 6018 (p. 172); Malalas 17.14 (p. 344). The extant Greek manuscript of Malalas does not provide a clear date for the fire, but two witnesses probably drawing on the lost original of Malalas do: Pseudo-Dionysios dates it to the year 837 (i.e. 525/6) and Theophanes to AM 6018, October of the 4th indiction (i.e. 525), a date which is generally accepted: see Downey 1961, p. 520 n. 75, though note that 'the earthquake preceded the fire' seems to be a mistake (the earthquake followed the fire). These texts describe a distinct fire whereas Evagrios Scholastikos states that 'frequent and terrible conflagrations occurred at Antioch, as if leading in the most frightful tremors that took place there and providing a prelude to the sufferings': Evagrios Scholastikos 4.5 (p. 155, trans. p. 203).

[15] Malalas 17.14 (p. 344, trans. p. 236).

[16] On the earthquake, see Marcellinus Comes, sa. 525–6 (p. 41); Malalas 17.16 (pp. 346–50); Evagrios Scholastikos 4.5 (pp. 155–6); Pseudo-Dionysios (II, pp. 47–52); Pseudo-Zacharias (II, p. 76); Theophanes, AM 6018–19 (pp. 172–3).

[17] Malalas 17.16 (pp. 346–7, trans. pp. 238–9). Italics indicate the parts of the text attested only indirectly.

[18] According to the *Life of Symeon* 7 (p. 8), these victims included the saint's father, John.

[19] On this earthquake, see Malalas 18.27 (pp. 269–70); Evagrios Scholastikos 4.6 (p. 156); Pseudo-Dionysios (II, pp. 72–4); Theophanes AM 6021 (pp. 177–8).

the city was considerable: 'the buildings that had been reconstructed after the former shocks collapsed, as did the walls and some of the churches.'[20] This second earthquake—presumably because it followed so soon on the heels of the stronger disaster, and impeded the repair efforts—also appears to have had a significant ideological and emotional impact,[21] as it prompted the emperor to rename the city Theoupolis, city of God, presumably as an appeal to God to restore his favour to the city.[22] Numismatic as well as literary evidence attests that the city's new name was used widely, if not exclusively.[23]

These disasters are mentioned not only by Antiochene authors but by writers from across the empire, which suggests their unusual severity and exceptional ideological impact. Prokopios refers to an 'exceedingly violent earthquake' in the city during the reign of Justin I.[24] Marcellinus Comes includes the earthquake of 526 in his Latin chronicle of the period, even though his predominant focus is on Constantinople and the Balkans.[25] So too Theodore of Petra, in his *Life of Theodosios*, describes his hero, a prominent Palestinian holy man, foreseeing God's anger coming to the east; he continues to recount that:

> After six or seven days, the news was brought that the great metropolis of the Antiochenes, as a result of a dreadful earthquake, had completely collapsed on the very day on which the great Theodosios had predicted the collapse, just as the prophet Jeremiah [had predicted] the capture of Jerusalem.[26]

And the bureaucrat John Lydos, based in Constantinople, emphasizes the damaging effects of the disasters in Antioch on the resources of the praetorian prefecture:

[20] Malalas 18.27 (pp. 369–70, trans. pp. 256–7).

[21] See Meier 2003, pp. 345–57, arguing that conventional coping strategies in times of natural disaster withstood the 526 earthquake but were severely challenged in 528.

[22] Malalas 18.29 (p. 371); Evagrios Scholastikos 4.6 (p. 156). One manuscript of Malalas claims that the decision to change the city's name was made at the order 'of holy Symeon the miracle-worker' i.e. Symeon the Younger. But the original manuscript seems to have read only 'Symeon': 'holy' and 'miracle-worker' were added later, and the link to Symeon the Younger seems unlikely, given that it is not attested elsewhere, and that Symeon was still a young child in the 520s. See Bury 1897, p. 229. Belgin-Henry has recently argued that this change in name was part of a wider 'sanctification of topography', in which Symeon the Younger's move up the 'Wonderful Mountain' may have played a role: Belgin-Henry 2019.

[23] On the coins, see e.g. Salamon 1993, pp. 15–20; Metcalf 2000, pp. 110–11. Salamon argues that some coins seem to refer to the city as 'Christoupolis' and possibly 'Kurioupolis' and 'Huioupolis', and connects this to the 'neo-Chalcedonian' theological programme of the patriarch Ephraim.

[24] Prokopios, *Wars* II.xiv.6 (I, p. 214, trans. I, p. 383).

[25] Marcellinus Comes (p. 41) (on his focus on the west, see Croke 1995, pp. xx–xxi).

[26] *μετὰ γὰρ ἓξ ἢ ἑπτὰ τὸν ἀριθμὸν ἡμέρας καταμηνύεται ὡς ἡ μεγάλη τῶν Ἀντιοχέων μητρόπολις διά τινος φοβερωτάτου σεισμοῦ κατ᾽ ἐκείνην ἐμπεπτώκει τὴν ἡμέραν, ἐν ᾗ τὴν ἔμπτωσιν ταύτης ὁ μέγας οὗτος προεφήτευσε Θεοδόσιος, ὥσπερ ὁ προφήτης Ἱερεμίας τὴν τῆς Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἅλωσιν*: Theodore of Petra, *Life of Theodosios* (p. 87).

> 'There was need of money, and without it none of the imperative tasks could be done.' In order, however, that nothing of whatever was necessary for overturning the prosperity might be neglected, tremors, springing and splitting the earth from its roots, crushed Seleucus' Antioch, having buried the city by the mountain situated above it, so that no distinction between mountain and city was left to the site, but the whole thing was glen and rocks, which erstwhile used to shade the Orontes as it flowed past the city. The prefecture, therefore, had to rain down over it an immense amount of gold meanwhile for the removal of the mounds which had been heaped up as a result of the collapse and had swollen up to a high rough terrain, for it was not safe to neglect the capital of the Syrians after it had been cast to the ground.[27]

This was not the end of the troubles which Antioch caused to the public finances. Lydos moves on directly to recount the next major disaster to strike the city, the Persian sack of 540:

> As the city, however, was recovering, just as if from nether gloom, with much toil, abundance of funds, and collaboration of trades, after Justin had reached his end, Chosroes the evil genius with a vast army invaded the Syrias through Arabia, and, when he had captured by war the recently collapsed city because it had appeared to him easily subdued as it was unfortified, he burned it down, after working incalculable massacre, and indiscriminately looted the statues with which the city was embellished, including marble tablets, carved stones, and paintings, and drove away all Syria to the Persians. There was no farmer nor contributor any longer for the public treasury, and yet, whereas revenue was not being brought in to the empire, the prefect was obliged to support the civil servant and to furnish the government with all its customary expenses at a time not only when he was being deprived of the taxes from the Syrians, which even alone used to turn the scale for the authorities, but, besides, was also being hard pressed to supply added outlays too great to be counted both for the captured cities and for the contributors, if perhaps any chanced to have escaped the Persians' bondage and to be wandering about in the deserted ruins of sites that used to be admired long ago.[28]

Lydos may, perhaps, have exaggerated the financial effects of these disasters in Antioch as part of his broader lament for the decline of the praetorian prefecture.[29] Nonetheless, it is clear that Khosrow I's sack of the city in 540 was widely

[27] Lydos, *De magistratibus* 3.54 (ed. and trans. pp. 216–17).
[28] Ibid.
[29] On Lydos, see Maas 1992.

perceived as a major catastrophe.[30] The best-known account of the disaster is provided by Prokopios in his *History of the Wars*. He narrates the events leading up to and during the sack in some detail, culminating with his famous reflection:

> But I become dizzy as I write of such a great calamity and transmit it to future times, and I am unable to understand why indeed it should be the will of God to exalt on high the fortunes of a man or of a place, and then to cast them down and destroy them for no cause which appears to us. For it is wrong to say that with Him all things are not always done with reason, though he then endured to see Antioch brought down to the ground at the hands of a most unholy man, a city whose beauty and grandeur in every respect could not even so be utterly concealed.[31]

Other authors, in contrast, were quick to identify the cause of the disaster. Thus the miaphysite chronicle of Pseudo-Zacharias of Mytilene presented the city's sack as God's punishment for Ephraim and other Chalcedonian bishops' rejection of Severos of Antioch and acceptance of Chalcedon, while, as we shall see, Symeon the Younger's hagiographer blamed it on paganism among the Antiochene population.[32] This highlights one reason why disasters could prove ideologically destabilizing: severe calamities demanded an explanation, opening the way for rival political, religious, and other groups to interpret the crises to suit their particular purposes, and, perhaps, to subvert dominant ideologies.[33]

The year after the Persian army had plundered Antioch, plague broke out in the eastern empire. In the next year, 542, it reached the much-afflicted Syrian city.[34] The so-called 'Justinianic plague' was described by numerous contemporaries, including Prokopios and John of Ephesus, but the author to give most information about its appearance in Antioch is the local church historian, Evagrios Scholastikos.[35] Evagrios—who moves straight from his account of the Persian invasion to describing the plague, emphasizing their chronological proximity—draws his readers' attention to a particularly damaging feature of the plague: its repeated recurrences throughout the later sixth century. In contrast to the largely

[30] For other accounts of the sack, see Marcellinus Comes (p. 48); Malalas 18.87 (p. 405); Pseudo-Dionysios (II, p. 69); Evagrios Scholastikos 4.25 (p. 172) (account based on Prokopios); Pseudo-Zacharias (II, p. 190) (unfortunately his full account of the invasion is lost); *Life of Symeon* 57–64 (pp. 50–6). On the event's ideological significance, see esp. Meier 2003, pp. 313–18.

[31] Prokopios, *Wars* II.x.4–5 (I, pp. 193–4, trans. I, pp. 343–5).

[32] Pseudo-Zacharias (II, p. 190); for Symeon's hagiographer, see below p. 162.

[33] On the ideological ramifications of disasters in this period, see esp. Meier 2003, passim: he focuses particularly on the growth of *Kaiserkritik* but addresses many aspects of the broader topic.

[34] On the sixth-century plague, see esp. the essays collected in Little 2007b.

[35] Prokopios, *Wars* 2.22 (I, pp. 249–56); John of Ephesus, as preserved in Pseudo-Dionysios (pp. 79–109); Evagrios Scholastikos 4.29 (pp. 177–9). See also Allen 1981, pp. 193–4.

depersonalized narrative of the earlier Antiochene chronicler Malalas, Evagrios explicitly states 'I decided to interweave my own affairs also into the narrative'.[36] Thus he not only gives a general account of the development of the plague, but also describes how subsequent outbreaks had affected his own life, from his childhood to the present day:

> At the outset of this great misfortune I was affected by what are called buboes while I was still attending the elementary teacher, but in the various subsequent visitations of this great misfortune I lost many of my offspring and my wife and other relatives, and numerous servants and estate dwellers, as if the indictional cycles divided out the misfortunes for me. Thus as I write this, while in the 58th year of my life, not more than two years previously while for the fourth time now the misfortune struck Antioch, when the fourth cycle from its outset had elapsed, I lost a daughter and the son she had produced, quite apart from the earlier losses.[37]

His moving account is suggestive of the difficulties of recovering from a calamity which kept recurring. Although there is no reason to think that Antioch was affected by the plague more severely than other major urban centres, it is possible that its effects were felt particularly keenly in the context of the previous disasters to strike the city.

Antioch's difficulties persisted in the later sixth century. As well as the repeated outbreaks of plague, earthquakes and invasions continued to pose a threat. The 550s saw several serious earthquakes in Constantinople and in the east: Antioch was affected, although it does not seem to have been among the worst-hit cities.[38] In 573 a Persian army under the command of the general Adarmaanes approached, but did not take, Antioch; John of Epiphania reports, however, that the attackers 'destroyed' the city's suburbs.[39] In 577, according to Evagrios, an earthquake caused significant damage in Antioch and total devastation in its suburb of Daphne.[40] In 588, a still more severe earthquake hit the city, apparently during the historian's wedding festivities:

> In the 637th year of the Era of Theopolis, in the 61st year after the previous earthquakes, when I was celebrating marriage with a young maiden on the last day of the month of Hyperberetaeus, when the city was conducting a festival

[36] Evagrios Scholastikos 4.29 (p. 178, trans. p. 231). [37] Ibid.

[38] Malalas 18.112 (pp. 413–14), 18.118 (p. 416), 18.124 (p. 419). Some of these earthquakes seem to be mentioned in the *Life of Symeon* 78 (pp. 66–8), 104–7 (pp. 81–8): see below pp. 150–6.

[39] John of Epiphania (p. 275); he is followed by Theophylact Simocatta III.10.8 (p. 131); see also Theophanes, AM 6066 (p. 247). Evagrios's account of this incident reports that the Persian army was repulsed unexpectedly from the city; he does not refer specifically to damage to the Antiochene suburbs but does describe the army's general pillaging of the region: Evagrios Scholastikos 5.9 (p. 206).

[40] Evagrios Scholastikos 5.17 (p. 212).

> and holding a public celebration of the procession and bridal ceremonies, at about the third hour of the evening, a convulsion and quake struck and levelled the entire city. Most buildings fell down when their very foundations were churned up . . . and an unquantifiable multitude was caught: as certain people conjectured, inferring from the bread supply, this affliction consumed about 60,000.[41]

Evagrios's claim that it had been sixty-one years since the last earthquake in Antioch must be a reference to the disasters of the 520s, implying that the 588 earthquake was much the most serious quake to hit the city since then. The historian notes that God's mercy was manifested in the crisis, since the patriarch Gregory was saved miraculously from death, and since there were no serious fires. Nonetheless, his description suggests that the earthquake dealt another severe blow to the city.

Evagrios's *History* ends in 592, the year of the deaths of both Symeon the Younger and Gregory of Antioch. No later historical work from Antioch survives to provide a detailed picture of subsequent events in the city. In the seventh century, like the rest of the Byzantine east, Antioch experienced conquest by both Persian and Islamic armies. But it was the natural and military disasters of the sixth century that distinguished its fate in the eyes of contemporaries—as well as in those of many modern scholars. The literary sources undoubtedly suggest that these disasters were of great significance in many areas: not only did they cause many deaths and considerable physical damage, but they also had financial repercussions, even at an imperial level, as well as provoking strong emotional responses.

The Archaeological Evidence

The question remains: do these literary descriptions provide a realistic picture of the impact of the disasters? It has been suggested that 'catastrophes' in fact had only limited effects, at least in economic terms.[42] When literary sources imply decline, archaeological evidence may suggest continuity or even prosperity. The economic situation of the sixth-century eastern Roman empire has provoked considerable scholarly debate, and even now few definite conclusions have been reached. The debate has centred largely on the question of whether the economy remained, in general, prosperous into at least the first decades of the seventh century, or whether it entered a period of decline from the mid-sixth

[41] Ibid. 6.8 (pp. 227–8, trans. pp. 298–300; quotation at p. 227, trans. pp. 298–9).
[42] Horden and Purcell 2000, pp. 305–8; Wickham 2005, p. 13.

century onwards.[43] The severity of the plague and its effects has been hotly contested.[44] It has become increasingly clear that it is dangerous to generalize about the Byzantine economy as a whole: the empire was very diverse, and even nearby settlements could experience divergent patterns of development.[45] It is thus necessary for the present purpose to focus closely on the particular area of interest, Antioch and its surrounding countryside in northern Syria. This chapter will look at city and countryside in turn, while recognizing that the clear divide sometimes drawn between town and country can be problematic, and that the economies of city and countryside were closely linked.[46] Archaeological evidence certainly complicates the picture of crisis drawn from the literary sources. It may lend some support to the view that Antioch and its hinterland saw economic contraction in the later sixth century, but does not straightforwardly reveal severe crisis or long-term devastation. Importantly, archaeologists are increasingly moving away from debating decline versus continuity or prosperity towards exploring new paradigms such as that of 'resilience', which encourage more nuanced ways of understanding a community's response to natural and military disasters.

The cities of northern Syria, and in particular Antioch, receive much more attention in the literary sources than the local countryside. In contrast, archaeological evidence for the cities is generally in short supply, which makes it difficult to assess whether the traditional picture of decline derived from the literary sources is accurate. The archaeological evidence from Antioch itself is particularly complicated. The material is limited, since most of the ancient city either lies under modern Antakya or is buried under silt deposits.[47] Some excavation has occurred, in areas including the 'island' between two branches of the river Orontes where the hippodrome and stadium were located, and the main street of the ancient city.[48] The original excavation organized by Princeton in the 1930s tended to prioritize earlier evidence and visually impressive material such as mosaics over more prosaic finds and late Roman/Islamic material.[49] The excavators also often

[43] For the former position, see e.g. Whittow 1990; Magness 2003. For the latter, see e.g. Kennedy 1985a; Liebeschuetz 2001a, esp. p. 410.

[44] For arguments that the plague did have a considerable impact, see e.g. Little 2007a; Sarris 2007; McCormick 2015; Meier 2016; for arguments tending to downplay its importance, see e.g. Haldon et al. 2018; Mordechai and Eisenberg 2019a, 2019b; Mordechai 2020.

[45] See e.g. Horden and Purcell 2000, p. 53; Liebeschuetz 2001a, p. 5; Stathakopoulos 2007, p. 117; Haldon 2012, p. 121.

[46] On the problematic divide between town and countryside, see esp. Horden and Purcell 2000, pp. 90–100; and on the terminology, Saradi 2006, pp. 96–100. On links between economies of town and countryside, see Foss 1995, p. 221; Liebeschuetz 2001a, pp. 7–8, 295; on Antioch in particular, see Di Giorgi 2016, p. 3 and passim.

[47] Sandwell and Huskinson 2004, p. 2. See, however, Casana's comments in the same volume: he notes that many sections of the ancient city are under fields, not silt, and could potentially be excavated (Casana 2004, p. 117).

[48] The excavation reports are published by Princeton: Elderkin et al. 1934–72.

[49] For a summary of the Princeton excavations, see Kenfield 2014; for critical discussions of the excavations and publications, see e.g. Bowersock 1994, pp. 423–4; Aser Eger 2013, p. 105; Di Giorgi 2016, pp. 27–33.

did not provide enough precise evidence about coin and pottery finds to make the provisional datings in their reports secure.[50] They sometimes seem to have associated signs of destruction with particular historical events on the basis of what one might expect from the literary sources, rather than from any solid evidence.[51] The excavators also assume that all the parts of the former city apparently left outside Justinian's new city walls (including the Orontes 'island') were abandoned in the sixth century, yet it is not certain that these areas were no longer inhabited just because they were now outside the walls.[52] Prokopios asserts, and archaeological evidence confirms, that rebuilding work was carried out after the disasters of Justinian's reign: the city did not become derelict.[53] Jodi Magness and Lee Mordechai, among others, have recently mounted substantial challenges to older claims of severe sixth-century decline in Antioch.[54] We must, therefore, be careful before suggesting that archaeology clearly supports a picture of devastation caused by disasters in this period.

Nonetheless, some evidence remains to support a picture of contraction and damage in the sixth century.[55] We find occasional signs of the abandonment of some buildings in the course of the sixth century.[56] For example, a survey on a road to the north of modern Antakya found a series of houses from the fifth or sixth century which may have been destroyed in a (perhaps earthquake-triggered) landslide, as they contain numerous skeletons under the destroyed roof. The area was never rebuilt, which may reflect sixth-century decline.[57] Even if the buildings left outside Justinian's new walls were not entirely abandoned, the decision to exclude large areas of the old city from the walls suggests that Antioch did not have the resources to defend all its residents.[58] There is also no active evidence of building, including church building, after the death of Justinian in 565, though an argument *ex silentio* is risky given the limited amount of excavation which has taken place.[59] It has been suggested that Antioch's major port, the nearby Seleucia in Pieria, was largely abandoned in the sixth century, which, if true, would be a striking indication of economic change and retraction in the area.[60]

[50] Ward-Perkins 1996, p. 150; Magness 2003, p. 206; Di Giorgi 2016, ch. 1.

[51] See e.g. Stilwell in Elderkin et al. 1934–72, III, p. 9. See also Asar Eger 2013, p. 105; Mordechai 2019, p. 214.

[52] Fisher in Elderkin et al. 1934–72, I, pp. 6, 19, 23 n. 5.

[53] Prokopios, *On Buildings* 2.10.2–25 (pp. 76–80); Foss 1997, p. 193; Brasse 2010.

[54] Magness 2003, pp. 206–9; Mordechai 2019.

[55] 'Contraction' is employed by Aser Eger 2013, p. 95; reduction of Antioch's size is also emphasized in Aser Eger 2015, pp. 64–5.

[56] For a general overview, see Foss 1997, pp. 193–4, although not all the dates he cites are definite.

[57] Casana 2004, p. 120; Asa Eger 2015, pp. 64–5.

[58] For an important recent study of Antioch's walls, see Brasse 2010.

[59] On churches, see the detailed study of the archaeological and literary evidence by Mayer and Allen 2012, p. 163.

[60] Kennedy 1985a, pp. 154–5; De Giorgi 2016, pp. 138–9. It is possible that the decline of Seleucia may have encouraged a growth in the alternative river harbour of Al-Mina: see De Giorgi 2016, pp. 142–3; for a more cautious view, see Vorderstrasse 2005, pp. 44, 68–9.

One seismological survey suggested that Seleucia was rendered unusable as a port due to silting caused by earthquakes.[61] Preliminary publications of recent rescue excavations in Antioch mention sixth-century damage associated with disasters, although the full evidence to support this has yet to be published.[62] Overall, although evidence is not abundant, it may suggest a reduction in prosperity in the second half of the sixth century. At the least, parts of the city and its suburbs seem to have experienced sustained damage, while other areas may have been hit less hard, or benefited more from reconstruction efforts.

To discover more about the fate of Antioch, it is necessary to turn to another environment whose fate was closely bound up with that of its leading city: the north Syrian countryside. The countryside of northern Syria is extensive and diverse; it is also unevenly furnished with archaeological evidence. Many of the most productive agricultural areas have produced little for the archaeologist, as fertile lands are inevitably most likely to see present day occupation. It is the 'marginal' areas—mountains, deserts—where the best evidence has survived for the study of the late Roman rural economy.[63] In particular, attention has largely focused on the impressively well-preserved ruins of the villages of the Limestone Massif, three ranges of mountains to the east of Antioch. There were around seven hundred villages on the Massif, of varying sizes, typically composed of similar limestone, often two-storey, decorated houses.[64] They seem to reveal striking prosperity: not only are the houses well built and sometimes spacious, but many of them also have carved adornments including elaborate column capitals. Decker argues that even the smaller houses on the Massif would have been worth at least 200 solidi, given that the church at Khirbet Hassan, similar in many respects to the middling sized houses of the Massif, cost 580 solidi.[65] This evidence of affluence has led to much debate on the status of the residents of the villages.[66]

The question of relevance here, however, is how long this prosperity continued. As in the case of Antioch, much debate on the Limestone Massif has focused on whether the villages remained prosperous until at least the seventh-century Persian conquests, or whether their economy began to falter in the sixth century. Many arguments have rested on the dating of the village buildings. Georges Tate, who has done the most extensive work on the dating of the houses, argued that new construction almost came to a halt in the sixth century.[67] He used the

[61] Erol and Pirazzoli 1992, although it is worth noting that the silting of the port could not be dated precisely by archaeological methods, and the date is again inferred from historical sources (they suggest that the 526 earthquake was probably responsible).

[62] Pamir 2014, pp. 106, 112. See the critical reviews of the volume containing this summary by De Giorgi 2015; Brands 2018. I am not aware of the excavation reports yet being published in full, although I must note that I am unable to read Turkish and have therefore been unable to consult publications in Turkish associated with these excavations.

[63] Sarris 2006, p. 117. [64] Wickham 2005, p. 443. [65] Decker 2009, p. 42.

[66] See below pp. 36–7.

[67] A French-Syrian team have been refining Tate's dating system on the basis of a close study of the village of Serğilla. The volume published so far only proposes a relative dating chronology, but promises

buildings dated by epigraphy to work out which building techniques and decorative styles were in use at different times, then dated the (far more numerous) buildings not dated by epigraphy by matching their construction techniques and styles to this scheme. Based on this system, he argued that house-building peaked in the late fifth century, beginning to decline from *c.*480; that by 550 it had already sunk to the level of the early fourth century; and after 550 it had all but stopped. Although inscriptions show that building work continued in the second half of the sixth century, the considerable majority refer either to churches or to extensions to houses, not to new houses, suggesting that settlement growth had come to a halt by this period.[68] No inscriptions were found from the seventh century.[69] Pottery and numismatic finds in excavations in Dehes had revealed, however, that settlement continued in the Massif until the ninth or tenth centuries; thus Tate sees demographic 'stagnation' rather than 'decline' in the late sixth century.[70]

Magness, however, has questioned Tate's (and Kennedy's) picture of stagnation in the Massif, on the basis of a reinterpretation of the three houses excavated at Dehes.[71] She states that the excavators' preconceived notions about decline in the sixth century caused them to misattribute the growth period at Dehes to earlier centuries when in reality it was the late sixth and seventh centuries that saw the most expansion in the settlement. She claims that all three buildings excavated at Dehes were in fact built in the late sixth or seventh century.[72] Her arguments are largely based on the pottery evidence; whereas previous interpreters had viewed the accumulation of seventh-century and later pottery on the ground floor of the houses as a sign of decline, as the village's inhabitants had ceased to take good care of their property, she suggests that in fact it shows that the houses were not inhabited, or constructed, before the sixth/seventh centuries. She dismisses the absence of epigraphy after 610 as 'meaningless', on the grounds that Dehes was clearly inhabited for several centuries more.[73]

Even if Magness's arguments about Dehes are correct, they do not by themselves challenge our overall understanding of developments in the Limestone Massif. We cannot ignore the epigraphic evidence from the surveys of the Massif. While it may not provide much evidence about population, it is suggestive of building patterns. The numerous inscriptions from the fifth century in particular show clearly that building cannot in the Massif as a whole have started only in

that an absolute chronology will be given in vol. 2. This will be a very important step forward: Tate and Abdulkarim et al. 2013 (see p. 559). This volume also has extensive further bibliography on the Limestone Massif.

[68] There are only three exceptions, two of which are from Deir Semaan, considered exceptional by Tate due to its status as the pilgrimage base for the site of Symeon the Elder's monastery at Qalaat Semaan.

[69] Tate 1992, pp. 85–179. [70] Ibid. p. 184.

[71] Her arguments have been accepted by scholars including Asa Eger 2013, pp. 206–9; Avni 2014, pp. 295–6.

[72] Magness 2003, pp. 196–206. [73] Ibid. p. 206.

the late sixth or seventh centuries. In addition, the decline in inscriptions from the mid-sixth century does imply a fall in house building. While it is true that a reduction in inscriptions may sometimes reflect a loss of the 'epigraphic habit' rather than a fall in building, this is unlikely to be the case here, given that inscriptions continued to be produced for new churches and for extensions to houses.[74] Recent studies of individual villages in the Limestone Massif, including Kafr ʿAqāb, have supported Tate's picture of a slowing of building in the sixth century.[75] There therefore does appear to be some form of economic contraction, or at least stagnation, in the Limestone Massif in the late sixth century. It is possible that any combination of the troubles facing sixth-century Syria—plague, war, and earthquake—could have affected the Massif directly; or that the disasters had an indirect impact, since crisis in Antioch, the main trading link of the Massif, could well have had a knock-on effect on the villages' economies.[76]

We should not overstate the extent of this economic decline in the Limestone Massif in the second half of the sixth century. It certainly does not appear to have become totally impoverished, as suggested not only by the continuation of church building (four churches are dated epigraphically to the period from 550 to 610, and, Tate suggests, nine more by decorative style) but also by the impressive silver treasure dedicated to the church in the apparently average village of Kaper Koraon.[77] It is not, however, entirely certain what conclusions should be drawn from wealth devoted to churches, either in the form of building or of expensive gifts. First, it is not clear what proportion of the population contributed to such endowments, and thus how far wealth was diffused in the society.[78] Second, it is possible that gifts to the Church would continue, or even increase, in times of difficulty, as a need was felt to propitiate God—hence the decision in the sixth century to give Antioch the new name of Theoupolis.[79]

Again, therefore, the picture that emerges of the economy of the Limestone Massif in this period is complex. It appears that the prosperous villages encountered some form of economic difficulty from the middle of the sixth century, resulting in a reduction in new building although not in severe impoverishment or depopulation. This lapse may well be related to a decline in Antioch's fortunes in the same period. The argument that Antioch and the Limestone Massif entered a

[74] The concept of the epigraphic habit was developed in Macmullen 1982. On new inscriptions from this period, see Kennedy 2007, p. 90.

[75] Riba 2018, passim, but for a summary pp. 394–5.

[76] Foss 1997, p. 204. Trombley has argued that economic change in the Massif can clearly be linked to the Persian invasions of the province rather than to the plague on the basis that there is a lull in inscriptions starting not in 542 (the year of the plague outbreak) but in 539 (a year before the Persian sack of Antioch): Trombley 1997, p. 176 n. 85. Yet the corpus of inscriptions is not large enough to show that the absence of surviving inscriptions from the two years between invasion and plague is significant.

[77] Tate 1992, pp. 336–7; on the Kaper Koraon treasure, M. Mango 1986, pp. 12–13; Boyd and Mango 1992, p. xxv.

[78] Cf. Naccache 1991, I, p. 300.

[79] Cf. Kennedy 1994, pp. 267–8.

closely connected period of decline in the late sixth century would clearly be strengthened if corroborative examples could be found from other rural areas close to Antioch. No other nearby area has as much easily accessible evidence as the Massif, but several important survey projects have explored lowland areas in the Antiochene.[80] The University of Chicago survey of the Amuq Valley, the land immediately around Antioch, has revealed intriguing finds. It has shown that, unsurprisingly, the valley around Antioch was densely settled in the late Roman period, and seems to have been prosperous: mosaic tesserae and imported pottery were found at many of the sites.[81] Reports have emphasized that the Amuq Valley probably had similar building patterns to the Limestone Massif; the latter should not be viewed as exceptionally prosperous.[82] The initial publications from the survey established that many of the Amuq Valley sites had ceased to be occupied by the tenth century at the latest, but uncertainties around pottery dating made it difficult to tell whether this process happened before, during, or well after the Islamic conquests.[83]

Subsequently, however, work on the pottery has enabled a more precise chronology. Asa Eger has argued that settlement in the Amuq in the late Roman period seems to have declined (or, if more ambiguously dated pottery is included in the analysis, to have stabilized), whereas elsewhere in the Levant the late Roman period shows the highest levels of settlement.[84] This was partially caused by environmental factors, as the Amuq became increasingly marshy in the late Roman period and thus less suitable for settlement, encouraging movement to upland areas such as the Limestone Massif.[85] Nonetheless, it seems to confirm that the Antiochene region experienced a different, and less prosperous, development pattern than other areas of the Levant in this period. This is also suggested by the epigraphic evidence: the declining rates of inscriptions in the Limestone Massif in the sixth century are not the norm. In the countryside around Hama/Epiphania, for example, to the south of the Massif, twenty-five of the fifty extant dated inscriptions come from the period 565–605.[86] The reduction in building in the Massif in this period thus seems to have been exceptional, and may well have been related to its close connection with the trouble-beset city of Antioch.

New archaeological and survey work, as well as the reconsideration of existing finds, has the potential to shed further light on the sixth-century development of the Antiochene.[87] Asa Eger and Alan Stahl are leading a re-examination of the materials from the 1930s Princeton excavations.[88] Turkish teams have conducted some new excavations in Antioch itself, under the auspices of the Hatay

[80] For a summary, see Asa Eger 2015, esp. pp. 39–47.
[81] Casana 2004, p. 115.
[82] Casana and Wilkinson 2005, p. 41; Casana 2014, p. 213.
[83] Casana and Wilkinson 2005, pp. 44–5.
[84] Asa Eger 2015, esp. pp. 40–2.
[85] Ibid. pp. 188–97; see also De Giorgi 2016, pp. 88–91.
[86] Foss 1997, p. 233.
[87] De Giorgi 2016, p. 8, speaks of a 'new vitality in Antiochene studies'.
[88] For some early results of this process, see Asa Eger 2013; Stahl 2017.

Archaeological Museum and Hatice Pamir.[89] As for the north Syrian countryside, the tragic events of the last decade have of course made further archaeological work very difficult. Recent detailed studies of individual villages from the Limestone Massif, as well as ongoing interpretation of survey data, do, however, offer hope of improving our understanding of settlement patterns in the countryside.[90] Newer methodologies and technologies may also be productive. Archaeoseismology as a discipline has faced substantial methodological challenges.[91] It can run the risk, for instance, of circularity, as seismologists attempt to deduce information about the magnitude of earthquakes from descriptions in historical sources; historians must then be wary about quoting this as evidence for the severity of the earthquakes, as it is clearly not independent of the literary material.[92] Nonetheless, interesting material has been brought to light: evidence of earthquake 'shifting' and damage has been discussed, for instance, at the site of Qalaat Semaan and in the aqueducts supplying Antioch itself.[93] These scientific studies have the potential to develop our understanding of natural disasters; the challenge for the historian is to develop sufficient skills in other disciplines to be able to read scientific publications analytically.[94]

Archaeologists have also developed new paradigms for understanding the effects of disasters on society. There has been a move away from straightforward analyses of decline versus continuity towards more nuanced discussions of responses to natural and military disasters. Scholars have become increasingly interested in the concept of 'resilience', as a way of understanding how societies responded to challenges posed by events such as natural and military disasters.[95] Archaeologists and seismologists alike now generally agree that events such as earthquakes in and of themselves do not typically have serious long-lasting negative consequences for most societies, although they could cause considerable short-term damage.[96] More important was how societies prepared for and responded to disasters; earthquakes of similar magnitudes could have very different effects in different physical and social environments. Earthquakes could also offer opportunities for cities to rebuild in accordance with changing social and

[89] See e.g. Pamir 2014 (though see critical reviews of the volume containing Pamir's article by De Giorgi 2015 and Brands 2018); Pamir 2016; Pamir and Sezgin 2016. Pamir's publications contain further references to more publications in Turkish, which unfortunately I have not been able to consult since I cannot read Turkish.

[90] e.g. Tate and Abdulkarim et al. 2013; Asa Eger 2015; Riba 2018.

[91] See e.g. Ambraseys 2009, esp. ch. 1; Sintubin 2011.

[92] Mordechai and Picket 2018, pp. 336–8.

[93] For Qalaat Semaan, see Karakhanian et al. 2008; for the aqueduct, see Benjelloun et al. 2015.

[94] For one example of a survey which attempts to integrate literary, archaeological, and scientific material, see Mordechai 2019.

[95] For a general overview of the concept of 'resilience', see Haldon and Rosen 2018 (and the articles collected in that volume); for sixth-century Antioch, see Mordechai 2019; on the Limestone Massif, see Lewit 2020.

[96] See e.g. Ambraseys 2009, p. 839; Mordechai and Pickett 2018, p. 344.

cultural needs and expectations.[97] Diversity is key here: some groups may have benefited from disasters, while others were left impoverished and facing challenges.[98] Earthquakes could heighten social tensions, acting as 'stress-tests that could trigger cascading effects that compounded pre-existing social vulnerabilities and weaknesses'.[99] These studies of resilience encourage historians to adopt a nuanced approach to assessing the economic, social, cultural, and ideological effects of disasters, one which appreciates variety and diversity and which interrogates how disasters intersected with other societal developments. When discussing crisis, we should distinguish between the strictly economic impact of disasters and their psychological and emotional effects, which could be much more significant. The perception of many contemporaries that Antioch was in crisis is shown, perhaps best of all, by its renaming to Theoupolis, in an apparent cry for help to a God who seemed to have forsaken the city.[100] The ideological as well as physical ramifications of disasters provide an essential context as we turn to an examination of social and cultural conflicts in the region.

Society and Culture

Social, cultural, and religious conflict in the sixth-century eastern empire has been the subject of considerable research.[101] Less work has been done, however, on the specific area of the Antiochene and northern Syria. This is largely due to the problems inherent in the source material from the region: this provides considerable, if often complex, evidence about some topics, such as the activities of the bishops, but far less about others. It is often difficult to assess whether the relative insignificance of some themes in the written sources—for example, lay elites, or late sixth-century miaphysitism—reflects historical reality or the preoccupations of the authors. There is nothing to compare to the papyrological evidence from Egypt which provides such a rich resource for socio-economic historians. It is thus not always possible to confirm whether broader theses that have been proposed about the empire as a whole apply to the Antiochene. In the second half of this chapter I will attempt, nonetheless, to explore three key potential areas of conflict within northern Syrian society: tensions between different socio-economic classes, cultural conflict between Christians, and religious friction between rival Christian and non-Christian groupings. When possible, I will relate the material from

[97] Mordechai and Pickett 2018.

[98] See esp. Izdebski, Mordechai, and White 2018, who analyse the unequal 'social burden of resilience'.

[99] Mordechai and Pickett 2018, p. 344.

[100] Mordechai offers a different explanation of Antioch's renaming, seeming to suggest that it was part of a drive by the government to encourage people to move to the city: Mordechai 2019, p. 213.

[101] Key works include Banaji 2001; Sarris 2006; Bell 2013.

Antioch to broader debates about sixth-century society, but my focus will remain throughout on the local evidence and its limitations and possibilities.

Socio-Economic Relations

The sixth century has been presented by some historians as a time of growing socio-economic inequality and of concomitant increases in social tension. Jairus Banaji has argued that late antiquity saw drastic change in patterns of power, status, and wealth in the countryside, as the traditional local landholding elites, associated with the town councils, were replaced by a new class of aristocrats whose authority derived predominantly from their offices in the imperial administration, but who came to 'dominate' provincial landholding. He claims that all levels of society had become increasingly stratified by the sixth century: among the upper classes, there were greater gradations than before, with a small group of aristocrats possessing far more power and wealth than even the rest of the landholding elite, while, among the peasantry, increasing divisions had emerged between a relatively small number of prosperous families with some social status and the majority, whose lives remained unstable despite general increases in rural wealth. He emphasizes, however, that different areas—even nearby areas—could have very different patterns of social organization, and that his arguments, which are predominantly derived from Egyptian papyrological evidence, might not apply across the eastern empire.[102]

Building, in some respects, on Banaji, Peter Sarris has also depicted the sixth century, and especially the later sixth century, as a time of heightened social conflict. He argues that across late antiquity, nobles had amassed increasingly large estates, taking over the lands of previously independent farmers through persuasion or coercion. This—and in particular, its impact on tax revenues, as the powerful aristocrats were better able to avoid paying their taxes—caused tension between aristocratic and imperial interests, which prompted Justinian to attempt to crack down on elite abuses. But Justinian failed in these efforts, and in the later sixth century the landholding elites further enforced their power in the countryside, effectively preventing the emperor from having any direct association with the rural population. This proved socially destabilizing on at least two levels: first, the lower classes increasingly associated the emperor with the powerful and often oppressive landholders, which may have loosened their loyalty to the government and possibly facilitated the invasions of the seventh century. Second, after the peasantry had enjoyed a brief improvement in living standards after the plague of 542, as their labour became more valuable, the reassertion of aristocratic

[102] Banaji 2001.

dominance in the second half of the century caused increased social resentment and sometimes even open class conflict.[103] The core of his book is focused on Egypt (in particular on the estates of the Apions), but he also applies his arguments to the eastern empire as a whole.[104] I will consider below whether his use of evidence from Antioch is convincing.

While Banaji and Sarris's analyses are predominantly socio-economic in focus, Peter Bell has recently examined a range of potential conflicts, including economic, religious, and ideological tensions, and imperial responses to them.[105] In the third chapter of his monograph, which focuses on the socio-economic themes discussed by Banaji and Sarris, he argues that, in the sixth century, relations between the rich and the poor were in general intensely exploitative: 'unless everything we read in the literary sources is seriously distorted, we have no compelling reason to dissent from the conclusion of A. H. M. Jones, a historian not given to sensationalism, that, "taken as a whole, the peasantry were an oppressed and hapless class".'[106] Emperors and nobles extracted as much revenue from the peasantry as possible—and their demands may have increased in the sixth century due to the varied financial pressures on Justinian's government, from natural disasters to the costs of war and building work. Although various factors combined to prevent any large-scale movements of class conflict, some peasant communities did practise varying strategies of resistance to oppressive magnates, and submerged social tensions were sometimes brought to the fore in times of crisis. Whereas Banaji's and Sarris's books rely heavily, although not exclusively, on Egyptian papyrological evidence, Bell's geographical focus is broader, as his arguments are based predominantly on legal and hagiographical material. All three scholars, however, acknowledge that there was considerable variation in social relations between different regions. Do their theses apply to the sixth-century Antiochene?

The historian attempting to answer this question is immediately forced to confront difficulties in the source material. Relatively little information survives from the sixth century about lay society in the Antiochene countryside, or even in the city itself. The homilies of Severos of Antioch might seem the most promising source for Antiochene social relations, as they certainly refer frequently to the rich and poor, but as Peter Brown has shown, Christian orators tended to use rhetoric about wealth and poverty in highly ideologically charged ways, often separating society into two binary groups without acknowledging different degrees and gradations in wealth and status.[107] Even the secular social elites are largely

[103] Sarris 2006, passim, but esp. pp. 228–34.

[104] For criticisms of Sarris's use of papyri in discussing the Egyptian evidence, see in particular Mazza 2008 (her own analysis of the Apion material is found in Mazza 2001); and Hickey 2012, e.g. pp. 28, 41 n. 15, 62–4, 98 n. 25, 110 n. 87, 127, 131 n. 178, 149–51, 157–9.

[105] Bell 2013. [106] Ibid. pp. 51–118, quote at 82–3.

[107] On Severos, see Alpi 2009, pp. 173–8; on Brown, see below pp. 99, 108.

invisible in the extant sources. The *comites Orientis* are sometimes mentioned by the chroniclers and historiographers, but in general far more is reported about the city's bishops. In part this must reflect the well-known phenomenon of the 'flight of the curiales' and related growth in status of the bishops.[108] Yet scattered references make it clear that Antioch did still contain some wealthy elites who played a prominent role in city life. The *comes Orientis* was undoubtedly influential: Asterios in the later sixth century apparently succeeded, if we can trust the report of Evagrios Scholastikos, in arousing the city's population against their patriarch, Gregory.[109] Earlier in the century, Severos, during his patriarchate in Antioch, wrote several letters arguing that disobedient clerics and monks should not be allowed to avoid the judgements of ecclesiastical courts by turning to civil courts: one was addressed to Hypatios the *στρατηλάτης* (general), whom the letter reveals to have been based in Antioch, and who, Severos implies, could have had the power to overturn the judgement of the Church.[110]

Except in the case of major imperial appointments, however, mentions of individual named notables are rare. More common are generic references to the city's notables, which suggest that it did contain a recognized elite, even in the later sixth century. Thus Severos in another letter refers to the 'glorious nobles/rulers' of Antioch;[111] Evagrios states that 'the entire upper tier of the city' supported Asterios against Gregory in the conflict mentioned above, and that 'very many of the notables' fell victim to the earthquake of 588;[112] Symeon the Younger's hagiographer refers to 'most of the leading men of the city'.[113] He also does in fact mention a few named notables, including Anastasios, a *scholastikos* and the friend of two *illustres*, Asterios and Thomas Veredaronas.[114] Evagrios Scholastikos himself should be considered a member of the elite, given that he refers to public celebrations in the city for his marriage festivities, to his servants and 'estate-dwellers [*χωρίτας*]', as well as to honours bestowed upon him by the emperors Tiberius and Maurice.[115] Unfortunately, there is little precisely dateable archaeological evidence to flesh out this rather meagre picture derived from the literary sources. While lavish elite houses, featuring famous mosaics, have been discovered in Antioch and its suburb of Daphne, most of these are dated to the fifth century or earlier and it is difficult to establish how long they remained in

[108] On this, see esp. Liebeschuetz 2001a, esp. chs 3–4, pp. 104–68; see also Liebeschuetz 1972, pp. 260–3.

[109] See below pp. 45–7.

[110] Severos, *Letters* 1.40 (I.I, pp. 126–9).

[111] ܪ̈ܝܫܐ ܡܫܒ̈ܚܐ: ibid. 1.43 (I.I, p. 136).

[112] *τὸ πᾶν τῆς πόλεως κεφάλαιον*: Evagrios Scholastikos 6.7 (p. 226, trans. p. 296); *ἀξιολόγων πλεῖστοι*: ibid. 6.8 (p. 228, trans. p. 300).

[113] *τοὺς πλείους τῶν πρώτων τῆς πόλεως*: *Life of Symeon* 161 (p. 144).

[114] See below pp. 163–4.

[115] For his marriage festivities, see Evagrios Scholastikos 6.8 (p. 227); for his estate dwellers, ibid. 4.29 (p. 178, trans. p. 231), for honours from the emperors, ibid. 4.24 (p. 240). Cf. Allen 1981, pp. 2–3.

use.[116] Thus, while it seems that there was an identifiable elite within the city, there are considerable limitations on how far we can understand their composition, numbers, and lifestyles.

The situation is still more difficult with respect to the countryside, for which literary evidence is extremely slight. Occasional references do suggest that elites owned estates around Antioch: thus for instance, as mentioned above, Evagrios refers to losing many of his 'servants and estate dwellers' to the plague, apparently implying that he possessed agricultural workers, although the term '*χωρίτης*' is perhaps ambiguous.[117] The sermons of both Severos and Symeon the Younger make several references to oppressive landlords and oppressed agricultural workers, but in generic terms which may reflect rhetorical convention as much as social reality.[118] Given the shortage of literary evidence, archaeology must come to the fore, and again it is the Limestone Massif that provides the most material. As mentioned above, most of the houses in the Massif appear to have been well-built, expensive structures. This notable evidence of prosperity has led to much debate on the status of the residents of the villages: were they subordinate to (probably city-based) landowners, or independent? Tate argued that there was no evidence for large estate owners in the villages, and that the residents appear to have been independently wealthy peasants.[119] This view that most of the Massif's residents were independent farmers has been widely accepted: Wickham, for example, although conceding that city-based landowners would be unlikely to show up in the archaeological record, has argued that it is very improbable that landowners would provide such elaborate housing for their tenants, and that tenants would struggle to pay for the houses themselves in addition to rent and tax.[120]

There are, however, sceptics. Purcell and Horden have argued that an 'independent producer is an inherently unlikely specimen in the Mediterranean world' and that the villages of the Massif belonged to wealthy landowners based in Antioch, whose subordinate peasants had 'little or no autonomy'.[121] They do not, however, explain why these dominant landowners would have expended significant sums of money on providing ornamented houses for their tenants. Sarris, while accepting that some of the Massif was inhabited by independent farmers—it being in any case relatively unproductive land, and therefore less appealing to large landowners—claims that there is also probable evidence for estate owners, adducing Tchalenko's argument that villages whose Arabic names

[116] The excavation reports from the houses at Antioch are problematic and the dwellings have yet to be thoroughly studied: see Dobbins 2000, pp. 51–2. The most convincing work on the dating of the mosaics in Antioch is that of Campbell 1988.

[117] *οἰκέτας τε καὶ χωρίτας*: Evagrios Scholastikos, 4.29 (p. 178, trans. p. 231).

[118] e.g. Symeon the Younger, Sermons 6.4 (pp. 19–20), 16.6 (pp. 79–80); on this theme in Severos's homilies, see Alpi 2009, p. 175.

[119] Tate 1992, p. 349.

[120] Wickham 2005, p. 447.

[121] Horden and Purcell 2000, pp. 274–5.

start with beit/ba were in origin *epoikia*, Byzantine estates. This etymological evidence is unconvincing, but Sarris also notes that we should not exaggerate the richness of the village houses, pointing out that the ground floors appear to have been dedicated to livestock.[122] Similarly, Bell makes the important point that some of the villages in the Massif may have been less prosperous than the more celebrated examples.[123] Bavant has recently argued that the archaeological evidence suggests the intervention of some non-resident landlords in parts of the Massif.[124] It seems likely that the Limestone Massif saw a combination of estate villages and autonomous farms; perhaps, as Sarris suggests, more fertile areas closer to Antioch would have seen more heavy involvement by the city's wealthy upper strata. Certainly, the notables of the city referred to in the sources discussed above must have possessed land somewhere in the region, if not necessarily in the Massif. There is some, although limited, epigraphic evidence for the existence of noble landholdings to the southwest of Antioch: a sixth-century inscription from Kara Douran, in the region of Mount Cassius, seems to refer to the property of either the ex-consul Patrikios, or the ex-consul (and future emperor) Justinian—its interpretation is uncertain.[125] Overall, it remains unclear how far the countryside was dominated by powerful nobles.

Given the limitations of the evidence relating to Antiochene lay society, it is difficult to make any firm statements about social relations in the period. Nonetheless, both Sarris and Bell have argued, largely on the basis of two references in the sources, that Antioch did conform to their picture of rising societal tensions.[126] The first of these is found in Evagrios Scholastikos's account of the Persian retreat from Antioch in 573.[127] Evagrios claims that the Persian defeat was entirely unexpected, since most of Antioch's population had abandoned the city, including patriarch Gregory, who had fled with the church treasures 'both because much of the wall had collapsed, *and because the populace*

[122] Sarris cites two authors on the topic (Sarris 2006, p. 122, n. 33). But the first, Sodini, states that village names are unreliable as sources for their subsequent development as their status may have changed without any concomitant change in name (Sodini 2003, p. 47), while the second, Feissel, explicitly notes that it is impossible to infer from the existence of a 'b' in an Arabic place name that it was originally an *epoikion* (Feissel 1991, p. 296). Sarris also attempts to use etymology to show that the region around Symeon the Younger's monastery saw many noble-owned villages, on the basis that the Lives of Symeon and Martha refer to several settlements with names with the formula 'chorion of *name*' (Sarris 2006, p. 121). He again cites Feissel in support of this argument, but Feissel's discussion focuses only on the *origin* of the place names, and does not draw any inferences about their social status in the sixth and seventh centuries (Feissel 1991, pp. 297ff.). For Sarris's argument about not exaggerating the wealth of the dwellings, see Sarris 2006, pp. 122–4.

[123] Bell 2013, p. 58. [124] Bavant 2013.

[125] Mouterde interpreted the inscription to read 'tomb belonging to the very illustrious and very glorious ex-consul Patrikios, in the time of lord Justinian' (*IGLS* 1232); Feissel as 'place belonging to the very glorious and very excellent ex-consul and patrician, (our) lord Justinian' (Feissel 1992, 404–7). See also *SEG* 42:1363. Strangely, Trombley (and subsequently Sarris) seems to have combined these readings: he refers to the inscription as commemorating a place which was owned first by Patrikios and subsequently by Justinian (Trombley 2004b, p. 76; Sarris 2006, p. 124).

[126] Sarris 2006, 232; Bell 2013, pp. 114–15.

[127] On which, see Evagrios Scholastikos 5.9 (p. 206).

had rebelled in its desire to begin a revolution, as is accustomed to happen and particularly at such moments [emphasis mine]'.[128] The second passage comes from the ninth-century chronicle of Theophanes, and refers to events of 608/9: the chronicler reports that Jewish rioters in the city 'killed many men of property and burnt them'.[129] These passages do suggest some tensions in the city. Yet the first does not explicitly relate the disturbance to any particular social discord, beyond a dissatisfaction with the city's leadership, while the latter postdates the events it describes by more than two centuries, and gives the conflict a religious as well as social dimension. Together, they may hint at the existence of social conflict within Antiochene society, but are not sufficient to prove that such conflict had *increased* in the sixth century. Rather, they suggest that in sixth-century Antioch, as throughout most of the ancient world, socio-economic inequalities and oppressive behaviour by elites created the possibility for social tensions.[130] Even if discord between the powerful and poor in society was usually submerged, it could be activated in certain contexts—and in particular in times of crisis. Antioch's repeated experiences of disasters and concomitant decline may have encouraged the development of these tensions, tensions, which, as we will see, could be exploited by individuals such as holy men for their own benefit.

Cultural and Religious Tensions

Social and economic tensions had an intimate, but by no means straightforward, relationship with cultural and ideological conflict. Peter Bell has provided a powerful analysis of ideological friction in the sixth-century empire. Of particular interest here are his arguments about the relationship of classical *paideia*, Christian ideology, and paganism.[131] He traces the complex position of classical *paideia* (and other manifestations of classical culture such as art) within the growingly dominant Christian ideology of the empire, showing that while the two could be combined harmoniously, they could also come into conflict.[132] Opinions varied about what was acceptable within Christianity. Particularly importantly, his analysis implies that the same or very similar 'classicizing' phenomena could, in different contexts and when embraced by different people, be regarded either as entirely legitimate and perfectly compatible with Christianity or as unacceptable relicts and symptoms of paganism. Equally, classicizing

[128] Evagrios Scholastikos 5.9 (p. 206, trans. p. 268).
[129] Theophanes, AM 6101 (p. 296, trans. p. 425).
[130] See de Ste. Croix 1981, passim.
[131] Bell 2013, esp. ch. 5.
[132] Many other scholars have also explored the relationship between Christianity and the classical tradition in late antiquity: see e.g. Jaeger 1961; Lemerle 1971, ch. 3; Garzya 1985; Bowersock 1990; Maas 1992; Liebeschuetz 1995; many of the articles in Allen and Jeffreys 1996; Johnson 2006a (esp. part 3); Kaldellis 2007a, part 1; Smith 2019.

cultural forms could be used by sincere Christians who viewed them as an unproblematic part of their cultural heritage—but they could also be deployed by religious dissidents who were often unable to reveal their pagan views openly but could express their ideological alienation by drawing upon traditions associated with pre-Christian culture. Indeed, in Bell's view it is essential to recognize that genuine pagan views were still relatively widespread in the sixth century.[133] For him, the manifold references to pagans in the literary sources, and in particular the many accounts of anti-pagan purges, only make sense in a world in which the existence of pagans was taken for granted—even if many of the accusations of paganism were fabricated, or at least exaggerated, for political reasons. For these cultural and religious tensions often had a social dynamic, since traditional elites were often associated with classical *paideia*, and thus social or political conflict between nobles and the emperor or nobles and the Church could be expressed in terms of cultural or even religious conflict. The traditional lifestyle and education of many notables rendered them vulnerable to accusations of paganism.

These themes are of great importance to an understanding of sixth-century Antiochene culture. Throughout the century we can trace divergent, and sometimes conflicting, attitudes within the city towards the classical inheritance and its contemporary manifestations. It is important to note that there is no simple correlation between these attitudes and particular socio-economic or political groupings: we find differing views even among members of elites with similar educational experiences. Not all manifestations of 'pagan' or 'secular' culture were confined to the elites. This is not to say, however, that these tensions never had any social or political aspects. Throughout much of the period these disagreements did not erupt into open conflict. But in the later sixth century, Antioch did see explosive religious-cultural controversy, in the form of several 'pagan' scandals, in one of which the patriarch, Gregory, was implicated. By examining the broader evidence for cultural tensions within the city first, before considering the pagan scandals in more detail, it may be possible to reach a better understanding of the intersection of ideological, socio-economic, and political factors within sixth-century conflict.

Public spectacles, civic identities, and Christian ideology

The surviving sources from sixth-century Antioch reveal the existence of an ongoing cultural clash between rigorist Christians who expected their co-believers to follow very strict moral codes and others who believed that Christianity was compatible with traditional aspects of culture and entertainment. This is shown particularly clearly by debates relating to one aspect of civic life with long-established pre-Christian roots: athletic and theatrical performances in the

[133] Anthony Kaldellis has also argued strongly for the persistence of paganism in the sixth century, including in elite Constantinopolitan circles: see e.g. Kaldellis 2003, 2004a, 2004b, ch. 5, 2014c.

theatres and hippodromes.[134] The population of Antioch had a reputation for its love of these spectacles, and they seem to have retained an important role in the city's life across the sixth century.[135] John Malalas records developments related to the theatres, games, and circus races in Antioch from the age of Augustus onwards.[136] As he recounts, in the sixth century emperors repeatedly banned theatrical performances, often in response to riots by the factions, but these bans usually proved temporary; although the performances had the potential to excite unrest, they were too popular to be suppressed entirely.[137] Chariot races also continued throughout the century. If we can believe the hostile report of John of Ephesus, Gregory, the patriarch from 570–92, even received money from the emperor to build a new hippodrome for the Antiochenes in an attempt to bolster his popularity after being accused of paganism:

> and, contriving to appease and mollify the people of his city, he asked the king to command him to build a hippodrome for them. He bestowed this on him, and in addition he gave him the expenses for the building of the church of Satan, in which he was going to perform his whole will and pleasure, so that he, as was said, even brought mimes with him down from the capital, so that for some, this was [a source of] laughter and mockery and derision, but for others, [a cause of] sorrow and distress ....[138]

John's scathing account provides an important reminder that theatrical and sporting performances could prove highly controversial. While the emperors' decisions to ban spectacles seem to have been based on fear of disruption, other Christians objected to the performances on moral grounds.[139] This is displayed particularly clearly in the Cathedral Homilies of Severos, who repeatedly fulminates against all kinds of spectacles, on various grounds, from the indecent dress and behaviour of both the actors and the audience, to the aggressive behaviour of the

[134] I focus in the following discussion primarily on the Roman-style hippodrome games, but the Greek athletic games were also subject to debate and lasted longer in Antioch than in most of the east (the last Antiochene Olympic Games was held in 520): see Remisjen 2015, esp. ch. 3.

[135] On Antioch's reputation, see e.g. Prokopios, *Wars* 1.17.37 (I, p. 88); *Life of Thekla* 15 (p. 228); with Saradi 2006, p. 296.

[136] e.g. Malalas 9.21 (p. 171), 10.27 (pp. 188–9), 12.3–10 (pp. 215–18), 12.26 (pp. 228–9), 12.44, 46 (pp. 238–40) (all examples from before the sixth century—on the sixth century, see below). On Malalas's interest in the hippodrome and circus factions see A. D. E. Cameron 1976, pp. 138–9.

[137] Malalas 17.12–3 (pp. 343–4), 18.41 (p. 376), 18.62 (pp. 390–1), 18.67 (p. 393).

[138] ...ܘܠܐ ܡܫܬܘܕܥ ܠܗ ܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܕܐܢܛܝܟ ܐܠܐ ܒܗ ܕܐܬ ܒܗ ܒܐܝܕܐ ܕܫܘܠܛܢܗ ܘܒܐܦ ܕܒܢܐ ܠܗ ܒܝܬ ܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܫܝܛܢ ܐ ܕܒܗ ܐܦ ܐܬܪ ܨܒܝܢ ܠܡܥܒܕ ܒܗ ܟܠ ܨܒܝܢܘܬܗ ܘܗܘ ܐܦ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪ ܐܬܐ ܐܦ ܥܡ ܡܫܚܩܐ ܡܢ ܩܪܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܕܐܦ ܠܥܕܬ ܠܗ ܠܡܣܒ ܠܗ ܠܥܠܡ ܕܐܝܟ ܕܠܡܢ ܗܘ ܠܗ ܠܥܝܓܐ ܘܫܚܩ ܘܠܡܢ ܗܘ ܠܗ ܠܒܟܝܐ ܘܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪ ܐܬܐ ܐܦ ܥܡ ܡܫܚܩܐ ܡܢ ܩܪܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܕܐܦ ܠܥܕܬ ܠܗ ܠܡܣܒ ܠܗ ܠܥܠܡ ܕܐܝܟ ܕܠܡܢ ܗܘ ܠܗ ܠܥܝܓܐ ܘܫܚܩ ܘܠܡܢ ܗܘ ܠܗ ܠܒܟܝܐ ...: John of Ephesus, Ecclesiastical History 5.17 (p. 268). For the dates of the sixth-century Antiochene patriarchs, I use Whitby 2000, p. 320.

[139] This was certainly not a new source of controversy in this period: John Chrysostom is only one example of an earlier bishop vehemently hostile to the theatre (see e.g. Leyerle 2001, esp. ch. 3).

spectators, and the cruel mistreatment of the animals involved.[140] He goes so far as to suggest that the theatrical and sporting performances are inherently pagan and incompatible with Christianity. Thus he claims that each kind of spectacle is consecrated to a particular pagan deity: horse racing to Neptune, wrestling to Mercury, wrestling with animals to Artemis, theatrical performances to Bacchus.[141] He protests that the common cry of spectators at the horse races, 'Fortune of the city, grant victory!' was effectively denying God's providence by attributing the outcome of the race to a demon, Fortune (a reference to the classical protective deity of the city, Tyche).[142] He associates processions at Daphne (for Severos, a notable centre of pleasure and luxury) with the veneration of Jupiter.[143]

If Hollman is right to date a curse tablet found in the hippodrome at Antioch to the late fifth or early sixth century, Severos's arguments might seem to be justified: the tablet calls upon various Olympian deities to curse the horses of the Blue faction.[144] Yet it is clear that the vast majority of those attending the spectacles in Antioch and Daphne at this time would have self-identified as Christians. Severos himself acknowledged that many people would not accept that there was any association between the performances and paganism, and that he would therefore have to persuade them of their wickedness on other grounds.[145] This was not, therefore, a clash between Christianity and paganism, but between different approaches to Christianity. To an extent, Severos's hostility towards the theatre and hippodrome may have been encouraged by the fear of losing members of his audience to their spectacles; it was thus in part a question of rivalry at a practical level.[146] Yet in other areas of society and culture it is equally possible to discern a deeper conflict between Christian attitudes towards 'secular' or 'pagan' material, which ranged on a spectrum from the complete condemnation of any aspects of identity or practice which were not explicitly Christian, particularly if they had pre-Christian roots, to the total acceptance of traditional culture as entirely compatible with Christian piety.[147]

[140] On the indecency of spectacles, see e.g. Homily 95 (p. 94); Homily 54 (p. 55); on the behaviour of the spectators, see e.g. Homily 26 (pp. 548, 550–2); Homily 54 (p. 52); for mistreatment of animals, Homily 26 (p. 548). For Severos on spectacles, see Graffin 1978; Saradi 2006, p. 296; Alpi 2009, pp. 178–83.

[141] Homily 54 (p. 48).

[142] ܙܟܝ ܓܕܗ ܕܡܕܝܢܬܐ: Homily 26 (pp. 544–6, quote at p. 544).

[143] Homily 95 (pp. 93–4).

[144] Hollman 2003, pp. 67–82 (for the dating, see 68–9). For discussion of magic at the circus races, see Graf 2015, pp. 278–9; he suggests that even Christians used this kind of spell at hippodromes.

[145] Homily 26 (pp. 546–50).

[146] See e.g. Leyerle 2001, pp. 13–19; Webb 2008, pp. 201–2.

[147] See also, for instance, debates among Antiochene Christians over baths and bathing: Schoolman 2017. Schoolman discusses evidence from the *Life of Symeon Stylites the Younger* at pp. 243–4, emphasizing that Symeon's hagiographer deploys baths as a setting for various miracle stories. I am less convinced that the *Life of Symeon* displays an unambiguously positive attitude towards bathing, and would note that as a baby Symeon refused to be brought into the baths (*Life of Symeon* 6 (pp. 7–8), while a later, wealthy, unbelieving critic of Symeon is smitten with death shortly after bathing in the public baths (and refusing to speak to Symeon's messenger because he was too relaxed after fasting and bathing) (ibid. 224 (pp. 195–6); see also below pp. 163–4)).

This is visible, for example, in expressions of civic pride and identity. Pride in one's city was an important phenomenon in classical culture, and usually involved an emphasis on the city's past, including myths related to its foundation, which had often taken place in the pre-Christian era. Some Christians, however, eschewed any pagan or pre-Christian elements in civic identities, instead stressing only their cities' roles in Christian history.[148] Severos, again, represents this rigorist Christian viewpoint. In his Cathedral Homilies he frequently exalts Antioch's special status, but bases this on exclusively Christian grounds. Thus he repeatedly cites the statement in Acts 11:26 that it was at Antioch that the believers were first called Christians.[149] He also claims that various martyrs had a particular fondness for Antioch, often because they had lived there, or been martyred there, or because the city possessed a relic of them.[150] Similarly, on a visit to the port of Seleucia he declares that the port was 'truly blessed and holy', and deserved imperial support for its regeneration, because Scripture reports that it was from Seleucia that Paul and Barnabas had set sail to Cyprus.[151] He makes no mention of any secular, let alone pagan, part of Antioch's history.

Other Christian authors took a very different approach. John Malalas, a contemporary of Severos, recounts Antioch's pre-Christian past at length, from its foundation by Seleukos Nikator.[152] The chronicler does not hesitate from recording explicitly pagan aspects of these myths (which he reports as factual history): even the story of its foundation revolves around a pagan act of augury.[153] He implies that the Antiochene people associated landmarks in their region with pre-Christian myths, reporting, for example, that Seleukos Nikator had:

> found that giants had lived in the land; for two miles from the city of Antioch is a place with human bodies turned to stone because of God's anger, which are called giants to the present day; equally, a giant known as Pagras, who lived in the land, was burnt by a thunderbolt. So it is plain that the people of Antioch in Syria live in the land of the giants.[154]

Malalas does not reject the image of Antioch presented by Severos; in fact, he too reports that Antioch was where Christians were first called Christians, and

[148] On varied conceptions of civic pride in the sixth century, see Saradi 2006, pp. 49–101.

[149] e.g. Homily 1.10 (Coptic version) (p. 258); Homily 26 (p. 542); Homily 28 (p. 576); Homily 80 (p. 324); cf. also Homily 125 (p. 246).

[150] e.g. Homily 51 (p. 376); Homily 35 (p. 448); Homily 75 (pp. 130–1); Homily 97 (p. 137).

[151] ܛܘܒܢܝܬܐ... ܐܝܟ ܕܒܫܪܪܐ ܘܩܕܝܫܐ: Homily 28 (pp. 574–6, quote at p. 576); cf. Acts 13:4.

[152] I cannot agree with Liebeschuetz (2004, p. 153) that Malalas was largely uninterested in civic pride; Antioch is at the heart of his chronicle. On Malalas's treatment of the ancient past and classical mythology, see Jeffreys 1979, pp. 216–28.

[153] Malalas 8.12 (pp. 151–2).

[154] Ibid. 8.15 (p. 153, trans. pp. 106–7).

highlights its association with various martyrs.[155] Yet for him this Christian history does not replace the pagan past, nor is the latter shameful or to be forgotten; rather the two complement each other as sources of pride and identity for the city.

Again, therefore, we find a tension between opposed Christian viewpoints, one rigorous and exclusionary, the other relatively inclusive (there were, of course, a range of possible degrees of strictness: we must imagine a spectrum of opinions, rather than two strictly opposed positions). It is important to recognize that this was a complex ideological conflict, and did not represent a divide as simple as, for example, the Church versus the laity. Not all clerics were as strict as Severos. As we have seen, patriarch Gregory apparently arranged for the construction of a hippodrome in Antioch. In one of his letters Severos reproached the clergy of Apamea for quoting 'the rhetor of Greece' in their letter to him, stating that they should have cited only the Bible.[156]

Nor did the tensions have a straightforward socio-economic dimension. As mentioned above, Bell and others have drawn a connection between continued adherence to classical culture and social elites. Indeed, it has been suggested that by this period the lower classes would not even have understood references to classical mythology.[157] It may well be true that intellectuals and elites were more likely to be interested in myth and classical history. Although the mythological mosaics that survive from Antioch seem to date from earlier centuries, mosaics with classical and quasi-pagan themes were still being produced for elite residences in the sixth century in other parts of the eastern empire.[158] Education in classical authors remained common for elites, and while Severos (who had himself trained as a lawyer) may have later shunned these aspects of his upbringing, he was probably in a minority.[159] Nonetheless, the controversy surrounding theatrical and sporting spectacles suggests that the problem was more complex: the spectacles must have been attended by Antiochenes from across the social spectrum, and, given that the popular mime and pantomime performances were still dominated by classical mythological themes, must have given many lower-class citizens some familiarity with aspects of pre-Christian mythology.[160] This was therefore an ideological conflict that did not correlate straightforwardly to any particular social divide, either between clergy and laity, or between rich and poor. Nonetheless, as will be argued later, these tensions could undoubtedly be exploited in the context of social polemic.[161]

[155] Ibid. e.g. 10.24 (p. 187), 11.10 (pp. 208–9), 12.35 (pp. 233–4).

[156] Severos of Antioch, *Letters* 1.30 (I.I, pp. 103–4, trans. II.2, pp. 92–3). On this and Severos's intolerance of classical learning, see Alpi 2009, pp. 245–6.

[157] See e.g. A. D. E. Cameron 2007, p. 39.

[158] See Bowersock 2006, pp. 31–63.

[159] On Severos's education, see Alpi 2009, pp. 40–1.

[160] See esp. Leyerle 2001, pp. 20–31.

[161] As we see with Symeon the Younger and his hagiographer; see below pp. 98–110, 162–7.

Pagan scandals

But did 'paganism' only survive in the eyes of rigorist Christians, in the form of cultural practices largely stripped of their original cultic significance, or did paganism as a religion really persist into the sixth century? Contemporary Christian sources from across the empire certainly refer frequently to the existence of pagans: a well-known example is John of Ephesus's account of his conversion missions, apparently supported by Justinian, to pagans in Asia Minor.[162] Modern scholars have been divided on how literally to interpret these accounts: some prefer (while not completely denying the survival of any paganism) to see the vast majority of references to paganism as either rhetorical, fear-mongering, or politically inspired, while others, although acknowledging that the label could be used for rhetorical purposes, insist that it would only be powerful in a society in which pagans still existed, and that there is no good reason to think paganism had been extinguished by this date.[163] Peter Bell notes, suggestively, that sixth-century authors sometimes refer to pagans in passing, rather than placing them at the centre of their narratives, in ways which suggest that 'their existence is taken completely for granted'.[164] It is unlikely that we will ever be able to prove how common paganism really was at this time, but there is no reason to dismiss out of hand the idea that some 'real' pagans might have lived in parts of the empire in the sixth century.

Nonetheless, it is clear that references to 'pagans' could be used to fulfil a range of polemical and political purposes which were not necessarily related to the realities of pagan survivals. The emperors provided much of the impetus behind this development. Pagans had been scapegoated for large-scale disasters by the emperors since at least the reign of Theodosius II (408–50).[165] In the sixth century, and in particular during Justinian's reign, there were recurrent imperially backed purges of 'pagans' in Constantinople and other major cities, often following on the heels of natural disasters.[166] It is difficult to interpret the driving aim behind these purges: they could be seen as purely cynical and politically motivated, given that the 'pagans' targeted were almost invariably members of powerful elites or dissident intellectual circles who could pose a threat to the stability of the regime. On the other hand, the emperor's religious convictions may have been crucial: Justinian may well have believed that it was necessary to remove pagans as well as

[162] On the missions in Asia Minor from 541–2, see John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 40, 43, 47, 51 (II, pp. 650, 658–60, 681; III, p. 163); Pseudo-Dionysios (II, pp. 77–8).

[163] For the former position, see for example Allen 1981, pp. 231–2; Déroche 1996, pp. 76–8. For the latter position, see Whitby 1991; Bell 2013, esp. pp. 235–46. The widespread survival of paganism is argued for even more emphatically by Trombley 1985b and Harl 1990. Kaldellis also has argued strongly for the persistence of paganism in the sixth century: see Kaldellis 2003, 2004a, 2004b, ch. 5, 2014c.

[164] Bell 2013, p. 240.

[165] Stathakopoulos 2004, p. 76; Millar 2006, pp. 120–2.

[166] On the purges, see e.g. Maas 1992, pp. 69–78.

other perceived 'sinners', such as homosexual men, in order to create orthodox ideological conformity and thereby to appease God.[167] It is perhaps best, with Peter Bell, to view the purges as both politically and religiously motivated.[168] The empire's secular elites were, as mentioned above, particularly vulnerable to accusations of paganism because, even if practising Christians, many retained aspects of elite pre-Christian culture and lifestyle, which could be condemned by rigorous Christians from different social circles as inherently pagan.[169]

Antioch itself saw two major anti-pagan purges in the sixth century. The first of these, which may have taken place in the mid-550s, is described only in the *Life of Symeon the Younger*.[170] The hagiographer recounts that the ἄρχων (commander/official) Amantios was sent to the city, whereupon he 'found most of the leading men of the city and many of its inhabitants possessed by Hellenism and Manichaeism and astrology and automatism and other ill-omened heresies'; he is said to have punished the culprits severely.[171] This incident is discussed in greater depth in Chapter 3, but several points should be noted now. The purge seems to have been imperially sponsored, as the hagiographer describes Amantios being sent from the palace; Amantios is also known as a Justinianic agent from the chronicle of John Malalas, in which he is named as the official sent to suppress the Samaritan revolt in Palestine in 555/6.[172] The purge had a political aspect as well as a religious one, as the hagiographer refers to Amantios condemning to execution a δημότης (common man/member of circus faction) who had been involved in popular/factional disorders. Finally, there may have been a socio-economic dimension to the incident, since the dissidents exposed by Amantios apparently included 'most of the leading men of the city'. This event, then, seems to fit into the broader pattern of Justinianic purges of 'pagans', including in particular members of elites, who may have posed a political threat to the city or emperor's security.

The second, more famous, incident, is in some respects more obscure, even though it is discussed at some length by two independent sources. It revolved (at least in terms of its significance in Antioch) around Gregory, patriarch of the city from 570 to 592. The former monk had experienced a turbulent start to his patriarchate: not only had his predecessor, Anastasios, been deposed by Justin II on rather dubious grounds, but in 573 Gregory had fled from Antioch in face of the

[167] Justinian's persecutions typified Byzantine society's generally repressive approach to homosexuality. Scholars have nonetheless sought to recover queer voices and writings in Byzantine history: see for instance Smith 2019; Betancourt 2020.

[168] Bell 2013, esp. pp. 306–7.

[169] See above pp. 38–9.

[170] It has been suggested that Amantios's activities in Antioch could have followed on from his suppression of the Samaritan revolt in Palestine in 555/6: see *PLRE* 3a, 'Amantius 2', pp. 52–4.

[171] ηὗρε τοὺς πλείους τῶν πρώτων τῆς πόλεως καὶ πολλοὺς τῶν κατοικούντων αὐτὴν ἑλληνισμῷ καὶ μανιχαϊσμῷ καὶ ἀστρολογίαις καὶ αὐτοματισμῷ καὶ ἄλλαις δυσωνύμοις αἱρέσεσι κατεχομένους: *Life of Symeon* 161 (p. 144).

[172] Malalas 18.119 (pp. 417–18).

threat of Persian invasion.[173] It is not clear whether this contributed to his unpopularity, but certainly by 579 he had provoked considerable opposition in his see. The conflict which broke out in this year is described by both Evagrios Scholastikos and John of Ephesus, who held diametrically opposed attitudes to Gregory: Evagrios worked for the patriarch, and was his close supporter, whereas John was very hostile to him on doctrinal grounds. Unsurprisingly, the two provide a very different account of events.[174] What is clear from both is that a major scandal exploded in the east when several prominent officials were supposedly discovered to be practicing paganism and even engaging in human sacrifices; Gregory was one of the figures accused. Even Evagrios acknowledges the hostility towards Gregory in Antioch: 'Gregory came into great danger, since great attacks were made upon him by the people';[175] John of Ephesus reports that 'the whole city was shaken and stirred up, and there were diverse shouts, and the church was closed, and Gregory did not dare to come out from the bishop's residence'.[176]

Perhaps surprisingly, no investigations seem to have been made into the patriarch at this point, an omission which John scathingly attributes to the establishment's desire to avoid a scandal. John does report, however, that 'some time later', Gregory went to Constantinople with many gifts for the senate and clergy; these apparently won him sufficient good will for the case against him to be dropped.[177] It was at this point that, as mentioned above, Gregory supposedly arranged to build a hippodrome in Antioch to appease its population. Evagrios's account of this second phase of the trouble is quite different: he reports that Gregory had quarrelled with the *comes Orientis*, Asterios, who successfully roused the elites, the people, the tradesmen, and the factions of Antioch against the patriarch.[178] Asterios was removed from his role as *comes Orientis*, but this failed to quell the disturbance, and various accusations were made against Gregory by the citizens, including a banker who claimed that the patriarch had slept with his married sister. Gregory was forced to go to Constantinople to defend himself, with Evagrios acting as his legal aide; after a detailed investigation, Gregory was cleared, and his accusers punished.

It is difficult to know how to reconcile these two accounts, and unlikely that it will ever be possible to establish the precise sequence of events. Nonetheless, the

[173] On Anastasios's deposition, see Evagrios Scholastikos 5.5 (p. 201); Theophanes, AM 6062 (p. 243), with discussion by Allen 1981, pp. 214–17; Whitby 2000, p. 261 n. 17. On Gregory's flight, see Evagrios Scholastikos 5.9 (p. 206).

[174] For discussions of the two accounts, see Rochow 1976, esp. pp. 123–30; Allen 1981, pp. 230–2, 250; Whitby 1991, pp. 123–5; Liebeschuetz 2001a, pp. 263–9; Lee 2007, pp. 103–6. John's account is found in his *Ecclesiastical History* 3.27–34, 5.17 (pp. 154–67, 267–8); Evagrios's in Evagrios Scholastikos 5.18 (pp. 212–14), 6.7 (pp. 225–6).

[175] Evagrios Scholastikos 5.18 (p. 213, trans. p. 278).

[176] ܪܓܫ ܟܠܗ ܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܘܐܬܬܙܝܥܬ. ܘܩܥܝܢ ܩܥܝܬܐ ܡܫܚܠܦܬܐ ܘܐܬܐܚܕܬ ܥܕܬܐ. ܘܠܐ ܐܡܪܚ ܓܪܝܓܘܪܝ ܕܢܦܘܩ ܡܢ ܒܝܬ ܐܦܝܣܩܘܦܘܬܐ: John of Ephesus, Ecclesiastical History 3.29 (p. 157).

[177] ܒܬܪ ܙܒܢܐ: ibid. 5.17 (p. 267).

[178] Evagrios Scholastikos 6.7 (pp. 225–6).

episode has suggestive implications. In particular, the accusations against Gregory raise the question of what was really at stake in anti-pagan violence. Even if it is possible that some of those targeted were practising pagans, it is highly unlikely that this was true of the patriarch himself. Some of those who resisted Gregory in Antioch may genuinely have believed that he was guilty of the charge. Other motives for involvement, however, seem to have been personal and political. Gregory certainly had his enemies in Antioch, as becomes clear in Evagrios's description of the later outbreak of opposition to the patriarch. As mentioned above, Evagrios reports that a conflict had taken place between the *comes Orientis*, Asterios, and Gregory, and that 'the entire upper tier of the city' sided with the general against the patriarch, as did as the 'popular element', the tradespeople, and the circus factions. A banker accused Gregory of having inappropriate relations with his sister, while 'other similar people' proffered 'indictments about how the prosperity of the city had often been abused by him'.[179] Unfortunately, it is difficult to know what had caused Gregory's quarrel with Asterios, as well as his apparent unpopularity in the city, although there is some suggestion of financial mismanagement. It is thus highly tempting to suggest that in this case accusations of paganism were used for political reasons, although the evidence is rather unclear, since, as we have seen, Evagrios implies that these accusations against Gregory were separate from the earlier charge of paganism, whereas John of Ephesus presents the two conflicts as closely linked. At the very least, it may be suggested that Gregory's unpopularity in certain circles must have rendered him vulnerable to charges of heterodoxy. This incident is particularly important given the relative silence of the literary sources on the activities of secular elites in Antioch compared to those of the patriarchs. If Asterios, with the support of local elites, was able to rouse most of the city against Gregory, powerful laymen could still pose a severe threat to the authority of the Church—although ultimately the threat did not prove fatal, since Asterios was removed from his position and Gregory was cleared of all charges. Certainly, the patriarch did not possess unquestioned authority within his city, whose political situation appears highly volatile.

Taken together, these various incidents confirm that anti-pagan purges were often not strictly religious in their origin; rather, they involved a heavy element of political conflict and score-settling, whether between emperors and elites or between local rivals for authority. This is not to deny that genuine anti-pagan fervour often played a vital role in the development of these movements, particularly, perhaps, in terms of gathering momentum and mass support. Indeed, accusations of paganism could only be powerful among a population which believed, in general, both that paganism existed and that it was an unforgivable sin that posed a threat to society, a view which was undoubtedly encouraged, in

[179] Ibid. 6.7 (trans. pp. 296–7).

some situations, by imperial and clerical elites. In the ideological climate of the sixth century, a charge of paganism was perhaps the most powerful way of destroying someone's reputation and status: few may have had the resources to resist such an allegation. This may be why the sources contain relatively little information about strictly political or social conflict in Antioch in this period: in a society with an overwhelmingly religious political discourse, secular tensions may well often have manifested themselves in 'religious' conflict. The events of the later sixth century clearly point to instability within Antiochene society: the patriarch, who by this point played a vital role in the city's secular as well as religious governance, seems to have relied on imperial support to retain his position in the face of widespread local opposition. It is tempting, if impossible to prove, that the city's repeated experience of disaster had contributed to this political volatility. Certainly, disasters are likely to have encouraged anti-pagan activity: as will be argued in Chapter 3, it was not only emperors who scapegoated 'pagans' for causing crisis.[180] Controversy over supposed paganism was thus closely linked to wider developments in the history of the city.

Christological controversy

One explanation that has been offered for the accusations against Gregory has yet to be considered: that the charges against him were invented or at least encouraged by his Christological opponents, miaphysites.[181] In order to assess the plausibility of this theory, it is necessary to consider in some detail the position of miaphysites within Antioch in the sixth century. This is challenging, however, since, below the level of the bishops, evidence about religion in the city is again uneven. Antioch has sometimes been presented as a Chalcedonian haven in the midst of a miaphysite countryside, and sometimes (perhaps more commonly) as a miaphysite stronghold.[182] The evidence presents two particular difficulties. First, it is often difficult to isolate evidence about the Antiochene area in particular from sources dealing with the east more generally; even the letters of Severos range in scope across the diocese of Oriens and beyond. Secondly, sources dealing with this topic are often highly polemically charged. It is not safe to state that Antioch was thoroughly miaphysite at the time of Severos's accession in 512 purely on the basis that the anonymous *Life of Severos* claims that the whole city welcomed the new patriarch with joy and spontaneously anathematized Chalcedon.[183] Nonetheless, enough material survives from the earlier decades of the century to draw some

[180] See below pp. 162–7. [181] As suggested by Liebeschuetz 2001a, pp. 262–9.

[182] For Antioch as Chalcedonian, see e.g. Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 170* n. 6; for Antioch as miaphysite, see Frend 1972, pp. 140, 166–7; Mayer 2009, p. 362.

[183] *Life of Severos of Antioch* (pp. 241–2). It should be noted that the hagiographer's main source for this passage, Zacharias Scholastikos's 'Life' of Severos, contains no reference to spontaneous popular anathematizations of Chalcedon. Allen has claimed on the basis of the former passage that Antioch was 'pro-monophysite' (Allen 1981, p. 152).

conclusions about what seems to have been a Christologically divided city. In the second half of the century evidence becomes sparser, since our major sources, including Evagrios Scholastikos's *History*, say little about contemporary Christological disputes; it is difficult to determine whether this omission is conscious and politic, intended to smooth over controversy, or whether it reflects the genuine unimportance of Christological divides in Antiochene society.[184]

In the early parts of the sixth century, Antioch was thoroughly divided on the question of Christology, perhaps more so than any other patriarchal see.[185] Events surrounding the deposition of the Chalcedonian patriarch Flavian in 512 provide evidence of an active Chalcedonian element in the population: Evagrios Scholastikos reports that when the anti-Chalcedonian bishop Philoxenos of Mabbog persuaded the monks of First Syria (that is northern Syria, normally regarded as predominantly pro-miaphysite in contrast to the Chalcedonian Second Syria) to pressurize Flavian into anathematizing Chalcedon, 'the populace of the city rose up and effected a great slaughter of the monks'.[186] Pseudo-Zacharias also reports, if in even vaguer terms, that the anti-Chalcedonian monks who went to Antioch to oppose Flavian met with violent resistance: 'some of them were beaten and some of them were killed; nevertheless Flavian was driven from his see.'[187] As Alpi has observed, there is no comparable evidence of violent unrest when Flavian's miaphysite replacement Severos was forced to flee his see later in the same decade.[188] In general, miaphysite sources describing Antioch during Severos's patriarchate tend to present the city as 'orthodox' (that is, for them, miaphysite).[189] Yet various references in Severos's own homilies imply that he was fully aware of the existence of Chalcedonians within Antioch. The caption to Homily 64 claims that it was pronounced in a church where 'Nestorians' (i.e. Chalcedonians) tended to congregate secretively.[190] In Homily 29 Severos states that it is necessary to anathematize heretics in order to prevent God from wreaking devastation on whole communities; this is why 'we' anathematize those who divide Christ into two natures. He then turns to talking about a particular 'wicked' man, apparently well known to his audience, who had lived among them spreading heresy and causing violent disturbances, without Severos knowing; finally, however, he had been exposed and punished, along with his

[184] The former position is argued by Allen 1981, pp. 42–4; the latter is suggested by Whitby 2000, pp. xl–xlvii, though he does also suggest that Evagrios's silence suited Chalcedonian efforts to cooperate with miaphysites.

[185] For Christological developments in the first decades of the sixth century, see Honigmann 1951, esp. pp. 7–25.

[186] Evagrios Scholastikos 3.32 (p. 131, trans. p. 174). On the position of First and Second Syria, see e.g. Menze 2008, p. 45; Alpi 2009, pp. 103–6, with pl. III (p. 309). In both provinces, however, there were exceptions to this general trend.

[187] Pseudo-Zacharias (II, p. 51, trans. p. 268).

[188] Alpi 2009, pp. 286–7.

[189] See the account by Severos's hagiographer of his accession, *Life of Severos of Antioch* (pp. 241–2). So too Severos in his own homilies generally seems to assume the orthodoxy of his audience.

[190] Homily 64 (p. 313). Cf. Mayer and Allen 2012, pp. 55–6, 204.

family and accomplices.[191] In both one of his homilies and one of his hymns he attacks claims by the dyophysites that a drought in the region had been caused by the anathematization of Chalcedon.[192] In this homily, he refers to:

> the raging wasps of the Nestorian heresy, which buzz with unpleasant and polluted sounds, go around between the houses and creep into the inner rooms, and, through one or two insane women somewhere, apply their leprosy, although the whole city is healthy and closes its ears to their words through the grace of God.[193]

The patriarch is here clearly trying to mock and downplay the significance of Chalcedonianism and its adherents, associating it with the credulous and weaker female sex, but the care he takes to refute the argument about the drought suggests that he felt dyophysitism to be a greater threat than he was prepared to admit. Even at the height of anti-Chalcedonian power in Antioch, therefore, Chalcedonianism was never eradicated.

Equally, miaphysitism seems to have remained active in the city and its environs even after Severos's deposition. While in exile both Severos and Philoxenos of Mabbog claimed that much of the Antiochene population had remained loyal to 'orthodoxy': thus Philoxenos said that he had heard that the 'God-loving Christian people of Antioch' were openly proclaiming their willingness to be martyred for the faith.[194] While these claims doubtless contain some exaggeration, it is unlikely that either bishop would have praised Antioch if it had wholeheartedly embraced Chalcedonianism. The chronicle of John Malalas reports that when, in the early 530s, a rescript was promulgated ordering that obdurate anti-Chalcedonians should be exiled, 'a riot broke out in Antioch, and the mob burst into the bishop's residence, throwing stones and chanting insults'.[195] Many monasteries in the Antiochene area endorsed miaphysitism even in the face of persecution. Pseudo-Zacharias records a list of monastic communities and abbots who were expelled in the persecutions of the 520s: it included the abbot of the monastery of the Syrians in Antioch, and the monastery of Thomas of Seleucia.[196] This last is particularly interesting as it shows that there were miaphysites in the coastal regions west of Antioch (close to Symeon the

[191] ܪܥܡܐ: Homily 29 (pp. 588–606, quote at p. 592).

[192] Homily 19 (esp. p. 26); Hymn 253 (II, pp. 701–2).

[193] ܘܕܒܘܪܐ ܕܒܪܘܙܐ ܕܗܪܣܝܣ ܕܢܣܛܘܪܝܢܐ : ܗܢܘܢ ܕܡܙܡܙܡܝܢ ܒܩܠܐ ܠܐ ܗܢܝܐ ܘܡܛܢܦܐ : ܘܡܬܟܪܟܝܢ ܒܝܬ ܒ̈ܬܐ ܘܡܫܪܓܝܢ ܠܬܘܘܢܐ ܓ̈ܘܝܐ : ܘܒܝܕ ܚܕܐ ܐܘ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܐܢ̈ܬܬܐ ܫܢܝ̈ܬܐ ܕܐܝܟܐ ܕܗܘ ܡܩܪܒܝܢ ܓܪܒܗܘܢ : ܟܕ ܟܠܗ ܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܚܠܝܡܐ : ܘܡܣܟܪܐ ܐܕܢܝܗ ܡܢ ܡ̈ܠܝܗܘܢ ܒܝܕ ܛܝܒܘܬܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ.: Homily 19 (p. 26).

[194] ܥܡܐ ܪܚܡ ܐܠܗܐ ܟܪ̈ܣܛܝܢܐ ܕܐܢܛܝܘܟܝܐ: Philoxenos (I, p. 80). See also Severos, *Letters* e.g. 1.54 (I.I, pp. 180–1); 4.8 (I.II, p. 302); 5.8 (I.II, pp. 361–5).

[195] Malalas 18.64 (p. 391, trans. p. 273).

[196] Pseudo-Zacharias (II, pp. 80–1). The expulsion of miaphysites from the monastery of Thomas is also recorded in the *Life of John bar Apthonia* 6–8 (pp. 21–4). On these persecutions and the relevant sources, see esp. Menze 2008, pp. 109–34, who emphasizes that the expulsions were often limited in scope (e.g. targeting abbots rather than entire monasteries).

Younger's monastery), not only to the east in the Limestone Massif. Antioch therefore was a divided city in the early sixth century: it cannot be seen in simple terms as either a Chalcedonian or a miaphysite stronghold. On both sides of the divide, accusations of violence were made: thus, after Severos's deposition, monks from Second Syria claimed that he had been involved in various attacks on Chalcedonian monks, including on a group travelling near Symeon the Elder's monastery in the Limestone Massif, while several anti-Chalcedonian authors denounced Ephraim, patriarch from 527 to 545, as a cruel and violent oppressor.[197] Even if the violence may have been exaggerated on both sides, such claims suggest that the conflict involved considerable embitterment and hostility, at least among the region's monastic communities.[198]

It is much harder to trace the fate of miaphysitism in Antioch later in the century. We have no sources comparable to the homilies and letters of Severos and Philoxenos for guidance. Later sixth-century anti-Chalcedonian authors display limited interest in Antioch. Thus in his *Lives of the Eastern Saints* John of Ephesus includes only a very few tales about Antiochene holy persons, none of whom are distinguished by their struggles for the faith.[199] This does not necessarily mean, however, that there were no miaphysites in Antioch, since John's focus throughout the work is on monks of his acquaintance, and in particular monks from his region of origin in Mesopotamia.[200] John's *Ecclesiastical History* contains a few references to miaphysite activity in Antioch in the later sixth century, but these generally describe exceptional events, rather than providing evidence of a widespread miaphysite presence. He discusses at length the activities of the controversial miaphysite patriarch Paul of Antioch (appointed in 564 by Jacob Baradaeus at the behest of Theodosios of Alexandria), whom John supported.[201] Paul, however, like other miaphysite bishops in this period, was almost certainly not based in his titular see.[202] John does refer to Jacob Baradaeus writing letters on the occasion of reaccepting Paul into communion 'both to here at the imperial city, and to Antioch, and to other regions', which might suggest a miaphysite audience in Antioch, but could also be a symbolic reference to addressees in Syria more

[197] For attacks on Chalcedonians, see *ACO*, 1st series, III (1940), pp. 106–9 with Menze 2008, pp. 46–7. For miaphysite criticisms of Ephraim, see Pseudo-Zacharias (II, pp. 174–6); Pseudo-Dionysios (probably John of Ephesus) (pp. 38–44, p. 53). Ephraim appears in the miaphysite *Life of John of Tella*, which describes him disputing with John and imprisoning him in Antioch: Elias, *Life of John of Tella* (pp. 65ff.); cf. Menze 2008, pp. 231–3.

[198] Cf. Menze 2008, p. 47.

[199] John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 46 and 52 (II, pp. 671–6, III, pp. 164–9).

[200] On the personal focus of John's work, see Harvey 1990a, pp. 31–3; Van Ginkel 1995, p. 41.

[201] On Paul of Antioch, see esp. Brooks 1929; Honigmann 1951, pp. 195–205; Lontie 1997; Booth 2017, pp. 161–8. Surviving sources favourable to Paul include (as well as John of Ephesus), an apologetic dossier of documents, edited by Chabot, *Monophysite Documents* (Latin translation in Chabot 1933; English summary and discussion in Allen and Roey 1994, Part 3); documents hostile to Paul include a treatise published in Lontie 1997.

[202] Honigmann 1951, pp. 173–4; Mayer and Allen 2012, p. 205; Booth 2017, p. 155.

generally.[203] Subsequently John also provides a hostile account of the miaphysite patriarch of Alexandria, Damian, sneaking into Antioch with the plan of appointing a certain Severos as patriarch to rival Paul. He gives a vivid description of Damian and his companions having to escape the Church of Cassian through the latrine in order to avoid capture by the Chalcedonians.[204] He also reports that the Ghassanid phylarch Al-Mundhir (who is valorized by John as a miaphysite leader) came to Antioch with emperor Tiberius's support and ordered the Chalcedonian patriarch to stop the persecution of the miaphysites; again, however, it is unclear whether this refers to persecution within Antioch or within the Syrian provinces more generally.[205] On another occasion, rival factions of miaphysite monks in the rural monasteries come into such violent conflict with each other that, according to John, they were imprisoned and brought to Antioch, causing their monastic habit to be 'mocked by pagans and Jews and heretics'.[206] John's accounts make it clear that miaphysitism was not an organized and cohesive movement in this period, but was riven by many factions and disagreements. These various references in his *Ecclesiastical History* show that Antioch was a place of concern for miaphysites in this period, but do little to reveal whether it saw a continuous miaphysite presence, or whether the miaphysites were losing support in the city and were only based in certain monasteries in the countryside.

On the Chalcedonian side, even Antiochene authors tell us little. Evagrios Scholastikos, for example, despite his professed focus on ecclesiastical history, barely refers to Christological disputes in Antioch during his lifetime. Michael Whitby has argued that the explanation for this silence may have been that in fact there were not very many miaphysites in Antioch at this time, and so they posed no threat to the Chalcedonian authors.[207] He suggests that the repressions of patriarchs such as Ephraim must have had some effect, and that in any case miaphysitism had always been more popular in the monasteries to Antioch's east than in the city itself. There certainly may have been a lack of anti-Chalcedonian clerical leadership in Antioch by this point: although the miaphysites had appointed replacement patriarchs of Antioch after Severos's death in 538, there were some gaps between appointments, and the patriarchs probably spent little time in their patriarchal see.[208] Even if miaphysitism did continue among the Antiochene laity, this would not necessarily have led to clashes with the

[203] ܠܟܘܪܐ ܠܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܘܠܐܦܪܟܝܘܬܐ ܘܠܡܕ̈ܝܢܬܐ ܕܐܬܪ̈ܘܬܐ: John of Ephesus, *Ecclesiastical History* IV.15 (p. 201).

[204] Ibid. IV.41 (pp. 221–4). On Damian's travels to Antioch (and thence to Constantinople), see esp. Blaudeau 1997; on Damian, see also Booth 2017 and 2018, with further references.

[205] John of Ephesus, *Ecclesiastical History* IV.42 (pp. 224–5). See Blaudeau 1997, pp. 151–2. On John's positive attitude towards al-Mundhir, see e.g. Wood 2010, pp. 251–3.

[206] ܠܡܒܙܚ ܡܢ ܚ̈ܢܦܐ ܘܡܢ ܝܗ̈ܘܕܝܐ ܘܗܪ̈ܛܝܩܐ: John of Ephesus, *Ecclesiastical History* IV.31 (pp. 211–12).

[207] Whitby 2000, pp. xl–xlvii.

[208] Honigmann 1951, pp. 173–4; Mayer and Allen 2012, p. 205; Booth 2017, p. 155.

Chalcedonians; there is some evidence that miaphysites and Chalcedonians could have friendly social relations, and sometimes even worship together.[209]

On the other hand, Pauline Allen sees the silence of Evagrios on this topic as deliberate, calculated, and polemical. By her argument, he had no desire to stir up pre-existing tensions, so avoided discussing the conflict, but, by all but ignoring the existence of miaphysites, implied that only the Chalcedonians constituted the true Church.[210] Occasional references do suggest that Evagrios, and other Antiochene Chalcedonians of his day, were acutely aware of ongoing conflict. In Evagrios's discussion of Severos's patriarchate, he refers to his enthronement missives, stating, 'these indeed have been preserved down to our time, and from there many disputes have arisen for the church, and the most faithful populace has been divided'.[211] Admittedly, this remark is not necessarily specific to Antioch itself, but it shows that Evagrios was well aware of continued conflict. Evagrios's employer, Gregory, made calls for Christian unity and an end to the obsession with difficult points of doctrine. Thus in a sermon on the baptism of Christ he presented the unquestioning worship of the heavenly powers as a model for his congregation: 'the cherubim and seraphim . . . sing hymns; they do not make excessive inquiries into the one whom they venerate.'[212] Later in the same sermon, Gregory appeals directly to his audience, 'Why do we fight each other pointlessly? Why do we battle each other, we who have been commanded to love even those who hate us? . . . why do we fulfil the desire of our common enemy?'; he continues to explain that it is the Devil who has stirred up the conflicts within the Church.[213] Evagrios too claimed that Christological conflict was caused by the Devil.[214] Such arguments must have been intended at least in part to win over a divided audience; Gregory's homily would surely not be necessary in a fully Chalcedonian city. Evagrios's downplaying of contemporary conflict thus seems likely to reflect a conciliatory attitude among some prominent Chalcedonians of the day, rather than the unimportance of miaphysitism in Antioch. This does not preclude the possibility that miaphysitism was declining in the city in this period, nor that relationships between miaphysites and Chalcedonians were often less tense than has sometimes been thought. Indeed, a more conciliatory approach by the clergy might encourage positive social interactions. But it does seem unlikely that miaphysitism could have been completely eradicated from the city within half a century, although its influence may have been greatly reduced.

[209] Cf. Whitby 2000, pp. xlv–xlvii, and see below pp. 128–9.

[210] Allen 1981, esp. p. 49.

[211] Evagrios Scholastikos 4.4 (p. 154, trans. p. 202).

[212] *Τὰ Χερουβὶμ καὶ τὰ Σεραφὶμ . . . ὑμνοῦσιν, οὐ πολυπραγμονοῦσιν, ὃν σέβουσιν*: Gregory of Antioch, 'On the Baptism of Christ' (col. 1873).

[213] *Τί μαχόμεθα πρὸς ἀλλήλους εἰκῇ; Τί πολεμοῦμεν ἀλλήλους οἱ προστεταγμένοι καὶ τοὺς μισοῦντας φιλεῖν; . . . τί πληροῦμεν τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν τοῦ κοινοῦ δυσμενοῦς*; ibid. (cols 1880–1).

[214] See esp. Evagrios Scholastikos 2.5 (pp. 52–3), where Evagrios also claims that Christological conflict was caused by the Devil; Whitby 2000, pp. xxxvii–xlvii; Ginter 2001.

Conclusion

In some respects, the sixth-century Antiochene reflects broader developments in the eastern Roman empire. Thus, despite gaps and interpretative difficulties in the evidence, we can see signs of conflict between emperor and local elites, between secular and religious leaders, and between the rich and the lower classes—although it is not clear that Sarris's argument that such social tensions were rising can be sustained. We can also see fundamental tensions within Christian approaches to identity and behaviour, which suggest that religion was not a straightforwardly integrating or unifying force in society. Conflicts over 'paganism' reveal the intensity that perceived religious dissidence could generate, and show how suppressed social and political tensions could find outlets in specific forms of violence. Yet Antioch's position was exceptional, largely because of the series of devastating disasters that hit the city across the sixth century. The literary sources paint a consistent picture of the physical and emotional damage caused by the crises. Although it is much harder to trace the effects of disasters in the limited archaeological record from the area, there is some evidence to corroborate the image of decline in the written sources. Certainly, there is no reason to question the severe ideological and emotional effects of the disasters, which are likely to have contributed to political, social, and religious instability within the city. Although social and cultural tensions undoubtedly reflect both long term developments in the region and wider trends in the society of the empire, they may well have been intensified and exacerbated in this context of crisis.

All of this provides the crucial background to the life and cult of Symeon Stylites the Younger. His whole life was, according to his hagiographer, interwoven with the disasters to hit the city: his father was killed in the earthquake of 526, while a significant part of his career revolved around handling the subsequent earthquakes, invasion, and plague which afflicted Antioch and its environs. Disasters posed a significant challenge to the saint's claims to be able to protect his supplicants. Any holy man's career was inextricably linked to his local society: he had to understand, and perhaps manipulate, social and cultural realities in order to carve out a space for himself as a source of authority. Thus, as we will see in the next two chapters, Symeon the Younger seems to have played on tensions between the wealthier and poorer classes, as well as on culturally sensitive areas such as paganism, as part of his efforts to assert his own role as moral arbiter and religious figurehead. This is manifested not only in the hagiographic material associated with his shrine, but also in a text which may well date from his lifetime, and which forms the subject of the following chapter: the sermon collection attributed to the stylite.

2

The Sermons of Symeon Stylites the Younger

Although holy men have been the subject of considerable historical interest since Peter Brown's famous article of 1971, they can usually only be approached, at best, at second-hand, through the prism of hagiography.[1] As discussed in the Introduction, it has been well established that hagiographers selected and adapted their material for a variety of purposes, from cult-promotion to apologetic and polemic; to take but one example, Claudia Rapp has argued that many hagiographers focused on their saints' miracle-working rather than their other important functions, which were less useful posthumously, in order to encourage pilgrimages to their saints' shrines.[2] As a result, studies which rely on this material must necessarily be studies more of hagiographers and hagiographic ideals than of holy men themselves.[3] For most holy men, we can never get beyond this hagiographic picture. Yet in a few precious instances, we also possess some of the saint's own writings, which enable us to gain a much fuller image of the holy man—and in some cases, an image that is strikingly different from that preserved in hagiography. Thus, for example, Samuel Rubenson has argued that the letters attributed to Antony, perhaps the most famous of all holy men, show that the saint was far more philosophically and theologically sophisticated than Athanasios's *Life of Antony* and the *Apophthegmata Patrum* acknowledge.[4] The much more extensive (although, unfortunately, relatively inaccessible) extant corpus of the fifth-century abbot Shenoute provides far more information about his life and character than does his largely formulaic biography, which claims to have been written by his disciple Besa, but in fact probably dates from considerably later.[5] Stephen Emmel has, for instance, managed to reconstruct, from parts of Shenoute's Canons, the controversial series of events which led to Shenoute becoming head of the White Monastery, events which are not even mentioned in Pseudo-Besa's *Life*.[6] Heike

[1] López 2013, p. 14. [2] Rapp 1999, p. 65.

[3] Such studies are, of course, important and interesting in their own right.

[4] Rubenson 1990, passim.

[5] Shenoute's works have yet to be edited in full, let alone translated, but editions are in progress on the back of Stephen Emmel's vital study of his corpus (Emmel 2004). On the probable late date of Shenoute's Life, see Lubomierski 2008 (although López has suggested that the work may ultimately derive from an encomium of Shenoute delivered by Besa soon after the saint's death: López 2013, pp. 135–6).

[6] Emmel 2004, II, pp. 558–64. For a detailed analysis of this episode, see Schroeder 2007, pp. 24–53.

Symeon Stylites the Younger and Late Antique Antioch: From Hagiography to History. Lucy Parker, Oxford University Press.
 DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780192865175.003.0003

Behlmer and David Brakke have both highlighted a tension between Shenoute's sermons, in which he refuses to use his miraculous powers to resolve everyday difficulties amongst his congregation, and his Life, in which he frequently performs such activities.[7] It is clear, therefore, that the writings of holy men can provide new and sometimes radically different insights into holy men from those gleaned from their hagiographies.

In view of this, it is perhaps surprising that the writings attributed to Symeon Stylites the Younger have received very little scholarly attention.[8] These consist of a letter apparently written to the emperor Justin II on the subject of a Samaritan revolt, preserved in the acts of the Second Council of Nicaea, a monoenergist theological quotation, and, most significantly, a collection of thirty sermons.[9] Admittedly, this collection presents various difficulties to the historian, which will be discussed below, but it at least possesses the potential to yield substantial insights into the thought and teaching of this important holy man. This chapter will, after a brief discussion of scholarship on the early Christian sermon, address the complicated evidence relating to the dating and authorship of the collection attributed to Symeon. It will then outline the themes, form, and style of the collection, arguing that although the author displays no rhetorical brilliance, he does construct his relationship with his audience in fairly sophisticated ways. It will analyse three dominant themes within the collection—monks and their relationship with demons, eschatology, and wealth—to suggest that the speaker presents himself as an experienced combatant with demons, and as a visionary prophet bringing an ominous message to the world. Different themes within the collection may have been intended for different audiences: some address monks, while others seem to target parts of society beyond the monastery. But throughout, the preacher insists upon uncompromising moral standards and on the stark divide between heaven and hell. His sometimes aggressive language and harsh message suggest that he may have played a less peaceful role within society than that which has often been associated with the holy man. In particular, many of his sermons contain very hostile attacks on the rich, phrased in a harsher fashion than most early Christian preachers; he goes so far as to associate wealth with paganism, and offers no possibility of a rich man entering heaven. The preacher thus seems to have sought to play on socio-economic and cultural tensions within Antiochene society.[10]

[7] Behlmer 1998, pp. 341–59 (Behlmer also discusses more generally the greater focus on miracles in 'Besa's' *Life* than in Shenoute's own writings); Brakke 2007.

[8] Though see the recent introduction to some of these materials in Boero and Kuper 2020, pp. 374–82.

[9] For details of the editions, see the Bibliography.

[10] On which, see the previous chapter.

The Early Christian Homily

Part of the explanation for the relative historiographical neglect of Symeon's sermons may lie in the generally underdeveloped and uneven state of scholarship on early Christian sermons.[11] It has been recognized that preaching played a crucial role in the rise of Christianity, and that sermons, particularly in view of their apparent popularity, should be fertile ground for research.[12] Nonetheless, although there are some important studies of famous preachers such as John Chrysostom, comprehensive work on sermons and preaching remains limited.[13] This is largely due to the myriad practical difficulties involved in treating the large extant body of early Christian homilies.[14] These difficulties include the sheer extent of the surviving material; some of the most renowned preachers have hundreds of sermons attributed to them in the manuscripts, making it difficult for scholars to treat their works in full. A particular problem is that it is often hard to establish the extent of an individual's authentic corpus, as many sermons appear to be falsely ascribed to famous early preachers such as John Chrysostom and the Cappadocian Fathers. As a result of these challenges, we still lack critical editions of many important homiletic collections.

It is also unclear how, why, and when, many of these sermons were preserved, and to what extent they were edited between their delivery and their transmission in their current forms.[15] No one-size-fits-all answer will serve: some sermons seem to have been recorded more or less verbatim by stenographers, others to have been extensively rewritten, either by the author himself, or by later editors.[16] Philip Forness, in an important recent study of the early sixth-century homilies of the miaphysite Jacob of Serug, has argued for a more nuanced understanding of the audiences of homilies: audiences included both those physically present at the sermon's delivery and those who later edited, read, and circulated the material

[11] As noted in Forness 2018, p. 24. Since I first completed the thesis on which this book is based, several important new studies of preaching have been published, including Forness 2018 and Cook 2019, both of which offer refreshingly new approaches to using sermons as historical evidence. For a general introduction to early Christian/Byzantine homilies, see Cunningham 2008; Mayer 2008a.

[12] On preaching and the rise of Christianity, see esp. A. M. Cameron 1991a, p. 79; cf. also Hartney 2004, pp. 5, 50, and passim; Brown 2012, p. 72; on sermons as a source for research, see Cunningham 1986, p. 29; Allen 1997, p. 4.

[13] Recent work on John Chrysostom's preaching includes Rylaarsdam 2014; Kalleres 2015; Finn 2018; Cook 2019.

[14] See e.g. Allen and Mayer 1993, pp. 260ff.; Allen 1997, pp. 5–8; Cunningham and Allen 1998, pp. 1–20; Olivar 1998; Mayer 2008a. These articles underlie most of the following discussion on problems in studying early Christian homilies.

[15] A particularly important recent discussion of transmission problems, focused on John Chrysostom's collection, is Cook 2019, ch. 2.

[16] See e.g. Rousseau 1998, p. 395; Lipatov-Chicherin 2013. For evidence of the different transmission methods within the corpus of John Chrysostom, see Goodall 1979, pp. 62–78; Mayer and Allen 2000, pp. 30–1; Cook 2019, ch. 2. Mary Cunningham has discussed issues of transmission relating to Byzantine homilies in various studies, including Cunningham 1986, 1996, and 2011.

in written form.[17] It is not even certain whether all works written in the form of 'sermons' were delivered orally or whether some were only ever intended for private reading. This brings the very definition of the sermon into question; but if we wish to restrict the label to apply only to those sermons which were delivered to an audience, the problem then arises of how we determine which texts were so delivered.[18] While in some cases references to specific behaviour by the audience, to particular contexts for delivery, and to the act of preaching itself strongly suggest that the sermon was delivered orally, the absence of such comments cannot always be taken to prove the opposite.[19] This problem becomes particularly acute if we take into account not only the sermons attributed to ecclesiastical leaders who almost certainly did preach to their congregations, but also the various collections of discourses on monastic and ascetic themes attributed to authors such as Isaiah of Scetis and Dorotheos of Gaza.

Some periods present especial difficulties: as suggested by Pauline Allen, one reason that sixth-century material has been particularly neglected is that some of its most notable collections survive only in translation (most famously, the Cathedral Homilies of Severos of Antioch); fewer scholars are comfortable working with Syriac and Coptic material than with Greek, while the translation process makes it even harder to assess the style of the sermon as originally delivered.[20] All these and other difficulties have impeded the progress of scholarship on the early Christian sermon, and, in particular, have practically precluded comprehensive overviews of the evidence.[21]

The lack of such overviews makes it much harder to situate the corpus of an individual author in its wider context. As I will argue, in order to understand the sermons of Symeon the Younger, we need an appreciation of both the ecclesiastical traditions of preaching, as exemplified by figures such as John Chrysostom and Severos of Antioch, and of the monastic tradition of ascetic discourses, as typified by authors including Evagrios Pontikos and Isaiah of Scetis. Although little of what Symeon says is in itself original, the combination of themes and approaches from these two traditions is unusual and striking. But before analysing the contents of Symeon's homilies, it is necessary first to examine in some detail the evidence relating to the authorship and transmission of his corpus.

[17] Forness 2018, esp. ch. 1 and conclusion. [18] Cunningham and Allen 1998, pp. 1–2.

[19] On the theme of comments about the audience, see esp. Olivar 1991, pp. 786–811.

[20] Allen 1998, pp. 202–6. Severos of Antioch's homily collection has yet to receive a comprehensive study, although it is drawn upon and explored in Alpi 2009. For studies of some individual homilies and some prominent themes in the collection, see Allen 1996, 2011; Parrinello 2013; and, on his homilies extant in Coptic, Youssef 2014, esp. part II chs 3–5, part III ch. 2. One important study on another Syriac homiletic collection (albeit one composed in Syriac, not in translation from Greek) is Forness 2018. For an introduction to Coptic sermons, see Sheridan 2007 and 2011, with further references.

[21] An important exception is Olivar 1991, a detailed survey of diverse aspects of early Christian preaching in east and west. Also of great importance is Ehrhard's study of the evidence for the tradition and transmission of early Christian hagiography and homilies (Ehrhard 1936–52).

Authorship

Did Symeon the Younger write the sermons attributed to him in the manuscript tradition? The question must be answered in several stages. It is worth stressing, first, that there is nothing inherently implausible in the idea of a holy man delivering sermons which were subsequently recorded. Early Christian hagiography makes it clear that holy men were expected to preach, mostly to their monastic disciples, but sometimes, too, to lay and clerical visitors.[22] Innumerable saints' Lives, not only of bishops, but also of monks, depict their heroes as preachers and teachers.[23] Some hagiographers even include the texts of long discourses supposedly delivered by their saints; Athanasios set the trend here, as he embedded within the *Life of Antony* a lengthy speech about demons and monks.[24] In addition, several hagiographers claim that their heroes' teachings were written down in their lifetimes, sometimes by their disciples, sometimes by the holy men themselves.[25] Although it is possible that some hagiographers invented such claims in an attempt to prove that their Lives were based on good sources, the Canons of Shenoute confirm that some holy men sought to preserve and even institutionalize their own teachings: Stephen Emmel has noted that the postscript to Shenoute's first Canon—a postscript apparently written by the holy man himself—demands that the leader of the Shenoutian monasteries should 'rely on it [i.e. the Canon] and not forget it or neglect to read its words four times a year, as is appointed for us'.[26] In view of this, it is perhaps surprising that we do not possess more collections of sermons by holy men (although it is possible, if rarely provable, that some saints' Lives preserve authentic discourses delivered by their heroes).

The *Life of Symeon the Younger* is one of the late antique saint's Lives to place the most emphasis on its subject's preaching.[27] It reports that Symeon began to preach, with divine inspiration, as a child: after the youth delivered a long sermon

[22] Escolan stresses the importance of preaching for monks, and especially for stylites: Escolan 1999, pp. 242–65.

[23] For bishops, see e.g. *Life of Rabbula* (pp. 173 (line 7)–181 (line 11)); John Rufus, *Life of Peter the Iberian* 105 (p. 158), 155–8 (pp. 228–34), 163 (p. 238), 179 (pp. 258–62); *Life of Severos of Antioch* (pp. 242–6); and Leontios of Neapolis, *Life of John the Almsgiver* 20–1 (pp. 368–72), 42–3 (pp. 393–7); for monks, see e.g. Athanasios, *Life of Antony* 16–43 (pp. 176–252), 55 (pp. 280–6), 91 (pp. 366–70); Bohairic *Life of Pachomios* e.g. 46 (pp. 48–9), 69 (p. 72), 86 (pp. 95–6), 105 (pp. 135–8); Kallinikos, *Life of Hypatios*, Prologue 8–18 (pp. 70–2), ch.13 (pp. 120–2), 24–5 (pp. 146–80), 27 (pp. 182–4), 48 (pp. 274–84); *Life of Alexander Akoimetos* 39 (pp. 688–9), 44 (pp. 692–3), 52 (p. 700); Cyril of Scythopolis, *Life of Euthymios* 9 (pp. 16–18), 29 (pp. 45–7), 39 (pp. 57–8); Theodore of Petra, *Life of Theodosios* (pp. 49 (line 22)–53 (line 12)); and Antony of Choziba, *Life of George of Choziba* 13 (pp. 111–14), 18 (pp. 116–18), 39 (pp. 137–41).

[24] Athanasios, *Life of Antony* 16–43 (pp. 176–252). For other examples, see e.g. Kallinikos, *Life of Hypatios* 24 (pp. 146–78); Bohairic *Life of Pachomios*, e.g. 105 (pp. 135–8); George of Sykeon, *Life of Theodore of Sykeon* 164 (pp. 150–2); Antony of Choziba, *Life of George of Choziba* 13 (pp. 111–14), 18 (pp. 116–18), 39 (pp. 137–41).

[25] See e.g. the First Greek *Life of Pachomios* 99 (pp. 66–7); Kallinikos, *Life of Hypatios* 27 (p. 184).

[26] Emmel 2004, II, pp. 562–3.

[27] See Van den Ven 1957, pp. 7–8.

to the monks of his monastery, the hegumen John remarked 'It is not he [i.e. Symeon] himself who says these things, but the all-holy, perfect Spirit of the Father; for it is written: "out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise for yourself."'[28] The hagiographer claims, soon afterwards, that the brethren asked Symeon to speak to them about salvation, prompting a long discourse on proper monastic behaviour.[29] While still a child, Symeon prayed to God to send grace upon him as he had upon his apostles and disciples, 'so that I may speak words of eternal life for the forgiveness of sins'; the purpose of preaching is thus defined as the salvation of the audience.[30] God, we are told, responded instantly:

> While he was uttering this prayer, the Holy Spirit of God came down upon his mind like a lamp, as he had requested, and filled him with wisdom and understanding; he was judged worthy of such grace that no one could, as is written, resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke.[31] He wrote discourses about monks and about the repentance of the laity and about the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ and about the coming judgement and hope, explaining clearly things which many fail to see.[32]

This implies that Symeon not only preached directly to the brothers, but also wrote down (*συνέτασσε*) his discourses. The topics of the discourses as listed show some parallels to those included in the extant sermon collection, which has led Van den Ven to suggest that this passage may in fact be referring to this collection.[33] Although the hagiographer does not, perhaps, stress Symeon's preaching to the same extent in his adulthood, he does continue to recount various shorter ethical speeches delivered by the saint throughout his lifetime;[34] he describes Symeon expounding the book of Job to the brethren;[35] and, incidentally, provides the text of several *troparia* the saint supposedly wrote in response to a series of earthquakes.[36] Symeon's hagiographer thus presents Symeon as a potent preacher, claiming that he taught through both speech and the written word.

[28] *Οὐκ αὐτὸς λαλεῖ ταῦτα, ἀλλὰ τὸ πατρικὸν καὶ τελειωτικὸν πανάγιον πνεῦμα· γέγραπται γάρ· Ἐκ στόματος νηπίων καὶ θηλαζόντων κατηρτίσω αἶνον*': *Life of Symeon* 24 (p. 21). See Matthew 21:16; Psalms 8:3(2).

[29] *Life of Symeon* 25 (pp. 23–9).

[30] *ἵνα λαλήσω ῥήματα ζωῆς αἰωνίου εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*: ibid. 32 (p. 32).

[31] See Acts 6:10.

[32] *Ταῦτα αὐτοῦ προσευχομένου, κατῆλθεν ἐξαίφνης ὥσπερ λαμπὰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ, καθάπερ ἠτήσατο, καὶ ἐνέπλησεν αὐτὸν σοφίας καὶ συνέσεως· τοσαύτης δὲ ἠξιώθη χάριτος, ὥστε μηδένα δύνασθαι ἀντιστῆναι, κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον, τῇ σοφίᾳ καὶ τῷ πνεύματι ᾧ ἐλάλει. Συνέτασσε δὲ λόγους περὶ μοναχῶν καὶ περὶ μετανοίας λαϊκῶν καὶ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τῆς μελλούσης κρίσεως καὶ ἐλπίδος, σαφῶς ἑρμηνεύων τὰ λανθάνοντα τοὺς πολλούς*: *Life of Symeon* 32 (p. 32).

[33] Van den Ven 1957, 24.

[34] See e.g. *Life of Symeon* 52 (pp. 47–8), 113 (pp. 92–3), 166 (p. 148), 171 (pp. 152–3).

[35] Ibid. 124 (pp. 106–7).

[36] Ibid. 105–7 (pp. 84–7).

Archaeology may provide some support for this vision of Symeon as preacher: there are two-layered benches cut into the walls at the sides of the open space surrounding Symeon's column, which could have provided seating for the audience of his discourses (although they could also perhaps have seated pilgrims who merely wanted to look at the saint).[37] Given the evidence from Symeon's Life, and from late antique hagiography more generally, that holy men could compose discourses, we should not be suspicious, *a priori*, of the idea that a collection of the stylite's sermons might have survived, particularly since there does seem to have been a collection made of his letters.[38]

This does not, of course, prove that the collection which does survive under the saint's name is authentic. Hippolyte Delehaye, in his magisterial study of stylites, expressed serious doubts about its attribution to Symeon, noting that 'dans ce genre de littérature rien n'est plus fréquent que les compilations faites de lambeaux de toute provenance, et placées sous le patronage de quelque nom illustre'.[39] He claimed both that the sermons themselves contain no indication that they were delivered by the stylite, and that the large number of monks called Symeon who wrote on spiritual themes could have caused confusion. Delehaye was writing several decades before the publication by Paul Van den Ven in 1957 of the first four sermons in the collection. In the introduction to his edition, Van den Ven proposed that the surviving sermons were based upon lost originals delivered by Symeon himself, but that they had been rewritten in a more verbose style by a later editor.[40] Almost all scholars who have subsequently dealt with Symeon's sermons have accepted Van den Ven's opinion of the origin of the text.[41] Although in the following discussion I will challenge some aspects of his arguments, I remain indebted to his presentation and analysis of the relevant material. I will look first at the manuscript tradition and external evidence for the authorship of the sermons, before moving on to consider evidence within the sermons themselves, and, crucially, the parallels identified by Van den Ven between the sermons and the *Life of Symeon the Younger*.

The sermons survive in a small number of manuscripts, the earliest of which are from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[42] The only manuscript to preserve the collection in its entirety, Mount Athos Lavra gr.BE 71 (191), dates from the twelfth century, and contains, in addition to the sermons, the *Life of Symeon the Younger*,

[37] Lafontaigne-Dosogne 1967, pp. 94–5; Djobadze 1986, p. 60.

[38] This is implied by the fact that the letter of the stylite quoted at the Second Council of Nicaea is described as his 'fifth' letter: Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 179*.

[39] Delehaye 1923, pp. lxxiv–lxxv.

[40] Van den Ven 1957, pp. 16–33.

[41] Thus Hester 1990, pp. 332–3; Allen 1998, pp. 204–5; see also *CPG* III, 7367 (p. 378). An exception is Olivar who, in his brief notice on the collection, argues, recalling Delehaye, that the peculiarities of the text suggest that it was a later compilation rather than an authentic record of Symeon's preaching. He does not support his arguments with any analysis of the text itself (Olivar 1991, pp. 179–80). Boero and Kuper have recently summarized Van den Ven's arguments, but suggest that the topic needs further study: Boero and Kuper 2020, pp. 376–9.

[42] My description of the manuscripts is based on that of Van den Ven 1957, pp. 8–12.

the *Life of Martha*, and several liturgical texts devoted to the stylite and his mother. This manuscript serves as the basis for Van den Ven's edition of sermons 1–4. It was unknown to Angelo Mai, whose edition of sermons 5–30 is based primarily upon Vaticanus gr.2021. Vaticanus gr.2021 originally contained the full text of the sermons, but the first section, containing sermons 1–4, has been lost.[43] The manuscript was finished, according to its copyist Bartholomew the monk, in 1105. Mai also used another, incomplete, eleventh-/twelfth-century manuscript from the Vatican, Vaticanus gr.2089, the second fragment of which contains nine of Symeon's sermons, as well as extracts from other religious works. The final relevant manuscript, Codex B.a.VII from the abbey of Grottaferrata, dates from the eleventh century and contains Symeon's eleventh and twelfth sermons. The texts of the sermons given in these four manuscripts are extremely similar; all also use the same captions for the sermons (captions which identify 'Symeon the stylite of the monastery of the Wonderful Mountain' as the author of the texts, and which all specify the age at which the sermon was delivered, within a range of ten to twenty-four years old). The Athos manuscript and the two Vatican manuscripts ascribe the same numbers to the sermons, which is particularly noteworthy in the case of Vaticanus gr.2089 as it contains only sermons 11, 14, 16, 22, 25, 26, 28, and 29. Notes in the margins of the Athos manuscript instruct that sermons 1, 5, 8, and 22 were to be read on specific feast days; Vaticanus gr.2089 contains the same instruction that sermon 22 should be read on the first Saturday of Lent (as mentioned, this manuscript does not include sermons 1, 5, or 8, so could not repeat the instructions in those cases).[44] The uniformity of the manuscripts strongly suggests that there was already a collection of these thirty sermons in circulation, attributed to Symeon the Younger, with the numbering and captions that have survived, and, possibly, with some link to liturgical readings. The surviving text is in many places very obscure, and this obscurity may well be partly due to textual corruption in the source of all our manuscripts.

When was this collection made? It is impossible to be sure, but we do possess a crucial piece of evidence proving that at least one of Symeon's sermons was already circulating, apparently under his name, long before the copying of the medieval manuscripts. John of Damascus, in his third discourse on images, dating from the early eighth century, quotes several lines of the eighth sermon in our collection, under the heading 'from the great Symeon of the Wonderful Mountain about icons'.[45] As John does not refer to the number of the sermon, nor use its

[43] Mai did, however, provide a text of sermon 4, derived from an edition by the Danish scholar Clausen on the basis of a lost manuscript.

[44] Van den Ven 1957, p. 13 n. 48.

[45] John of Damascus, On Images, 3.126 (p. 194). Cf. Van den Ven 1957, p. 23. The wording of the excerpt in John of Damascus is extremely similar, but not identical, to that printed by Mai. Paul Speck has cast doubts on the dating of this text, as with many other iconophile texts, arguing that it in fact was written in the ninth century. On Speck's arguments, which have failed to win widespread acceptance, see below pp. 118–20.

title, this cannot in itself be used to prove that the full collection as we have described it already existed in the eighth century. Yet Van den Ven has argued persuasively that the whole collection is stylistically and thematically homogeneous, implying that it was all the work of the same author.[46] This does, then, suggest that the collection must have been written, at the latest, in the early decades of the eighth century, and that it was already attributed at this point to Symeon of the 'Wonderful Mountain' (i.e. Symeon the Younger), although it is possible that the captions and liturgical links were a later development. Unfortunately, external evidence can take us no further; John of Damascus is the earliest known author to refer to the sermons.

Internal evidence from the collection itself may provide more clues. We must, however, be on our guard here to avoid reading too much into the text; some pieces of evidence that have been adduced by previous scholars to support Symeon's authorship do not seem to me compelling. Van den Ven, for example, argues that the author must have lived near Antioch, since the sixth sermon was directed to an Antiochene landowner.[47] This reference to Antioch, however, only appears in the caption to the sermon; in the body of the text, while there are many attacks on wealth, and a rich person is addressed directly, there is no link with a particular city.[48] Given that, as mentioned, the captions all identify 'Symeon the stylite of the monastery of the Wonderful Mountain' as the author of the sermons, the reference to Antioch here is of little value in identifying the collection's authenticity; if we agree that the captions are authentic, Symeon's authorship must be accepted anyway. Although Van den Ven notes that the captions do not always fit the contents of the sermons very accurately, and suggests that they were added by the editor of the text, he nonetheless regards them as preserving some genuine information, such as the young age at which Symeon delivered the sermons.[49] This is not, however, entirely compelling: while it is true that at some points the speaker of the sermon implies that he is a young man, at other points he presents himself as elderly:

> When I repent, pleasures pass me by; I have old age in mind, and death's tomb drags me, naked of the commands and unready, to judgement .... I was revealed a flourishing tree, and marred by old age, I am cut down for burning. I am whitened grain, and I am harvested by the angels who wield scythes.[50]

[46] Van den Ven 1957, pp. 19–20. [47] Ibid. p. 22.

[48] The caption describes the sermon as a speech *πρὸς τινὰ κτήτορα Ἀντιοχείας*.

[49] Van den Ven 1957, pp. 12, 32, 29.

[50] *καὶ ὅταν μετανοῶ, τὰ τερπνά με διαβαίνει, καὶ τὸ γῆρας ἔχοντός μου κατὰ νοῦν, ἡ ταφή με τοῦ θανάτου γυμνὸν τῶν ἐντολῶν καὶ ἀνέτοιμον ἕλκει πρὸς τὴν κρίσιν .... φυτὸν ἀνεδείχθην εὐθαλὲς, καὶ ἐκ τῆς παλαίοτητος διαφθαρεὶς ἐκκόπτομαι πρὸς κατάκαυσιν. σῖτος εἰμὶ λευκανθεὶς, καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν δρεπανιστῶν ἀγγέλων θερίζομαι*: sermon 10.2 (p. 46).

While this passage is doubtless largely rhetorical, it is difficult to imagine it being delivered, as the caption claims, by a 13-year-old! It is thus far from clear that the captions are genuine, and they cannot be used as strong evidence to associate the text with Symeon.

Other scraps of evidence adduced by Van den Ven are more suggestive.[51] In the first sermon, unknown to Mai (and by extension Delehaye) the speaker's name is identified as Symeon ['I, Your servant, Symeon'].[52] Van den Ven has argued that the allusion to the speaker's 'station [*στάσεώς μου*]' in the same sermon is a reference to his 'station' as a stylite on his column. In the first sermon the speaker also claims to have been young when he first became an ascetic:

> And stretching my hands towards You, my saviour, I will leap along with the joyful company of the bodiless ones and all the prophets and apostles of the ages, the martyrs, the confessors, *and those of the same age as me when I began my asceticism, the children killed by Herod* [emphasis mine].[53]

This fits well with the claim in the *Life of Symeon* that Symeon first joined his monastery aged six, and ascended his first column at the age of six or seven.[54] On their own, these pieces of evidence are not decisive; while the picture of the speaker that emerges—of an ascetic, from a young age, with a 'station', called Symeon—certainly would fit Symeon the Younger well, Delehaye's suggestion that the sermons could have been the work of another Symeon who was later confused with the more famous stylite remains possible.

Yet there is a final, crucial, piece of evidence that seems to prove that the 'Symeon' of the first sermon is to be identified with Symeon Stylites the Younger. Van den Ven has shown the existence of indisputable connections between several passages in the sermon collection and some episodes in the *Life of Symeon the Younger*.[55] In two cases, we find accounts of the same vision in the sermons and in the *Life*, but in the sermon collection they are recounted in the first person, as if seen by the speaker himself, while in the *Life*, they are reported in the third person, as visions which Symeon saw as a child. In one of these visions, recounted in the ninth sermon and in the eighteenth chapter of the *Life*, Symeon is said to have seen the Devil with his hordes of demons. Both versions refer to much the same details—musical instruments, the Devil's diadem, gold and precious stones, Sin the Devil's daughter, and the sign of the cross scattering the demons—even if in a

[51] Van den Ven 1957, pp. 21–2.

[52] *ἐγὼ ὁ δοῦλός σου Συμεών*: sermon 1 (p. 35).

[53] *καὶ τὰς χεῖράς μου πρὸς σὲ τανύσας, τὸν σωτῆρά μου, συσκιρτήσω τῇ εὐφροσύνῃ καὶ πολιτείᾳ τῶν ἀσωμάτων καὶ πάντων τῶν ἀπ' αἰῶνος προφητῶν καὶ ἀποστόλων, μαρτύρων, ὁμολογητῶν καὶ τῶν ἀφ' οὗ ἠρξάμην τῆς ἀσκήσεως συνηλίκων μου τῶν ὑπὸ Ἡρῴδου ἀναιρεθέντων παιδίων*: ibid.

[54] For Symeon's youthful ascent to the column, see *Life of Symeon* 10–12 (pp. 10–12), 15 (pp. 13–14), 258 (p. 223); cf. Van den Ven's discussion of the chronology of his life: Van den Ven 162–70, I, pp. 124*–30*.

[55] Van den Ven 1957, pp. 24ff.

somewhat different order. There are also clear verbal links between the two: in sermon 9, for example, the speaker reports 'and I have seen the spirit of avarice, a plague and sordidly greedy for gain, gaping to swallow up the world';[56] while the *Life* recounts 'there he saw the spirit of fornication and forgetfulness and laziness and the spirit of avarice gaping to swallow up the world'.[57]

In the second example, both texts seem to be referring to the same event—an occasion on which Symeon was tempted by lust in a dream, but was saved after swearing never to succumb and after taking the Eucharist—but, interestingly, it is recounted in almost entirely different terms. In the *Life*, the narrative is fairly straightforward. The hagiographer reports that Satan tried to tempt Symeon with titillating dreams, but that Symeon resisted him through the power of God; he woke up and lamented, praying to God for mercy; he then saw a 'holy minister, a priest from the altars above', carrying a cup of the Eucharist; the place was filled with a sweet smell; and the heavenly minister made Symeon swear that he would never succumb to lust.[58] The account in the ninth sermon is less clear: the speaker reports that he fell asleep, saw visions of pleasure, resisted them, understanding that they were the work of the Devil; that he was bound by an oath on the body of Christ that he would not succumb to lust; and that this dispelled the vision. He then reports: 'I made pledges to Christ of virtues and of prayers, receiving with a sweet smell, in the partaking of life, His body and blood, to which I swore my oath, through a wise man. And in him I recovered from the vision of the spectacle.'[59] The two accounts are clearly closely linked: features that appear in both include temptation in a dream, an oath not to succumb to lust, the taking of the Eucharist, a sweet smell, and the involvement of a virtuous man. But the sermon is more concise, and much less clear, than the *Life*: most notably, whereas the *Life* reports that a heavenly priest appeared and brought the Eucharist, the sermon only states that the speaker took the Eucharist 'through a wise man'.[60] Unfortunately, this cannot obviously be used to prove the direction of the relationship between the texts; while it is possible that the author of the sermons presupposed a knowledge of the account in the *Life*, and therefore felt able to write allusively, it is equally possible (perhaps even more likely) that the hagiographer, if he was drawing on the text of the sermon, would have felt the need to develop and clarify its words.

[56] *καὶ τὸ τῆς φιλαργυρίας εἶδον πνεῦμα λοιμὸν καὶ αἰσχροκερδῆ κεχηνότα τοῦ καταπιεῖν τὸν κόσμον*: sermon 9.5 (p. 41).

[57] *ἐκεῖ εἶδε πνεῦμα πορνείας καὶ λήθης καὶ ῥᾳθυμίας καὶ πνεῦμα φιλαργυρίας χαίνον τοῦ καταπιεῖν τὸν κόσμον*: *Life of Symeon* 18 (pp. 15–16).

[58] *ἅγιον λειτουργὸν ἐκ τῶν ἄνωθεν θυσιαστηρίων πρεσβύτερον*: ibid. 35 (p. 34).

[59] *καὶ τῷ Χριστῷ συνταγὰς ἀρετῶν καὶ εὐχῶν ἐποιούμην, δεχόμενος μετ᾽ ὀσμῆς εὐωδίας ἐν μεταλήψει ζωῆς τὸ σῶμα καὶ τὸ αἷμα αὐτοῦ, εἰς ὃ ἐπιστωσάμην τὸν ὅρκον, δι᾽ ἀνδρὸς συνετοῦ. καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ τὴν ἀνάνηψιν ἔσχον ἐκ τῆς ὁράσεως τοῦ θεάματος*: sermon 9.2 (p. 39).

[60] A subsequent passage in the same sermon may also refer to this incident, in equally oblique terms: it speaks of the demons of fornication and wickedness screaming at Symeon but being dismissed by a saint from heaven: sermon 9.7 (pp. 42–3).

The third example of a relationship between the sermon collection and the *Life* is of a different nature. Rather than a vision recounted in the first person in the sermons, and in the third person in the *Life*, we find the same sermon (in different versions) delivered directly in both. In chapter 24 of the *Life*, the hagiographer reports that the saint delivered a speech, and proceeds to give a text which is clearly connected to the third sermon in the collection. I provide a translation of both sermons in parallel below, in order to show both the close relationship between them, and the different styles of each.[61] I translate the version given in the *Life* in full; for reasons of space, I have omitted (but marked) a passage from the third sermon of the collection which is not paralleled in the *Life*. Parts of the sermon which are impossible to translate into comprehensible English are italicized. I also give a translation of select passages from the Fourth Book of Maccabees, which seems to have inspired the sermon.[62]

Life of Symeon Stylites the Younger, ch. 24.	**Sermon 3**	**4 Maccabees**[63]
Pious reason is master of the emotions and is bound to the body, and just as a machine holds together the breaths which are drawn and is held together by them, so too the body and the emotions moved in the body are clearly ruled by pious reason.	Pious reason is master of the emotions; for it is bound to the body, and just as a machine holds together the [breaths] which are drawn, so it is held together by examination and condemnation of reasonings that are poured out, so that the body and the emotions moved in the body are clearly [ruled] by ruling reason.	1.1: I am about to discuss an eminently philosophical subject—whether pious reason is master of the emotions . . . . 1.7: On the basis of many and diverse considerations I could show you that reason is master of the emotions . . . .
For when God created man in the beginning, He established in him a guiding mind as a charioteer, as a judge of the whole body and an examiner of the good and bad thoughts that arise in us.	For when God created man in the beginning, He put in his heart a guiding mind, like horses and charioteers of our whole body, creating the chariot with four wheels through dryness and wetness and hot and cold, from which things we reach up to the separation of the soul and the body, of the joints and the marrows,	2.21–2: Now when God fashioned man, He planted in him his passions and habits, but at the same time He enthroned the mind among the senses as a sacred commander over them all.

[61] I have chosen to provide translations rather than the original Greek since Van den Ven 1957, pp. 41–6, has already presented the two passages in Greek in parallel (without translation).

[62] Van den Ven notes the connection to 4 Maccabees in a footnote (Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 20), but does not explore it in detail. I give the passages here as I believe that they may help to identify the relationship between the different versions of Symeon's sermon.

[63] My translations here are based closely on that of the *NETS* by Stephen Westerholm: I have made only minor changes to highlight points of comparison with the Symeon texts.

	distinguishing by our governing mind the onset of what is good and what is bad, and examining what is in us, both what is good and what is bad, and controlling our thoughts like some rein on a horse we roll towards the tracks of the desires in us . . . [the speaker develops the metaphor of the charioteer and chariot for several further lines].	
And so no one is [so] mindless that he is ignorant of what is beneficial, but we also recognize that those who have done evil will not escape the coming judgement. For if desires for pleasures overcome us and we are captured by them instead of fighting bravely against their attacks, we are found out as transgressors of our promises and are justly condemned.	For no one is too mindless to discern what is beneficial, just as we know of what is evil that when we do it [the evil doers] are brought to judgement. And so desire is defeated and is overcome by reasonings. For whenever we desire the smoothness of pleasure, let us not fall into the destruction of transgression, if our reason does not wish it.	
	Just as it is possible to compare a tree with offshoots [παραφυάδας], whose branches when it is neglected sink down, *thus also reason, by not rousing the soft reposes of the body towards the trunk*,[64] dries out the offshoots [παραφυάδας] of desires, that is yearnings.	**1.28–9: Just as pleasure and pain are two plants growing from the body and the soul, so there are many offshoots [παραφυάδες] of these plants. By weeding, pruning, tying up, watering and in every way irrigating each of these, reason, the master cultivator, tames the jungles of habits and passions.**
For none of us is able not to desire, having been born so by nature. But not yielding to pleasure, since pious reasoning prevails, we can [achieve] easily on account of fear of judgement. And none of us can be completely delivered from evil	For none of us is able not to desire, since this is part of our nature. But not to yield to pleasure, since pious reason and fear of judgement prevail, is of our own choosing. Likewise we can put a stop to anger through the same process of reason.	3.2–4: None of us can eradicate such desire, but reason can provide a way for us not to be enslaved by desire. None of you can eradicate anger from the soul, but reason can help to deal with anger. None of us can eradicate malice, but

Continued

[64] *τὰς πρὸς τὸν στέλεχον μαλακὰς ἀναπαύσεις τοῦ σώματος*: the image is obscure.

Continued

Life of Symeon Stylites the Younger, ch. 24.	**Sermon 3**	**4 Maccabees**
dispositions and anger. But through the good victory of reason we can aid our anger to recoil and change. None of us again can prevent gluttony and the cravings arising from it; but we can bridle gluttonous indulgence and the desires arising from it.	Let us rein in gluttony and the cravings begotten from this through prayer and laborious fasting. Let us not only turn away from greed because it is prohibited, but also hate it.	reason can fight at our side so that we are not overcome by malice. For reason is not an uprooter of the emotions but their antagonist.
This is what the divine law too testifies to in advance when it says: 'You shall not desire the wife of your neighbour, nor his field, nor his male slave, nor his female slave, nor any of his possessions',[65] teaching us through these words not to be conquered by desire for woman, nor by vainglory or empty show, nor to be controlled by anger, nor to be defeated by gluttony or avarice or other bad desires.	This is what the God-given law testifies to in advance when it reminds us, saying: 'You shall not desire the wife of your neighbour, nor his field, nor his male slave, nor his female slave, nor any of his possessions', through which words it revealed that we should not be conquered by desire for woman, if one of us feels desire, nor be flattered by vainglory earnt by much empty show, nor be controlled by anger, nor be possessed by gluttony and avarice. Just as desire is one, many are the many-branched thoughts of its protuberances, as for instance we desire to be gluttonous, to fornicate, to love money, to be vain, and we apply to the body the same muddiness of pleasure towards each passion of the desires.	2.5: Thus the law says, 'You shall not desire the wife of your neighbour, nor any of his possessions.'

[65] Deuteronomy 5:21.

This is why the Lord pointed out two paths, the former, narrow one leading to salvation those who walk on it and are zealous to behave well in this life, but the other, broad one, leading to destruction those who scorn the virtues.[66] Thus He proclaims: 'What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light.'[67] Now, to contemplate and do what is wrong brings an image of darkness, [an image] condemning those who have sinned; but choosing, through good behaviour, that which is good and just, leads to the eternal light to come. And so let us master pleasures with pious reason, and let us turn away from every bad and sin-loving desire, emulating the lives and toils of the saints and the glory which is prepared for them and the difficult-to-describe promise on account of which we should stay awake and always pray, being freed, brothers, by the freedom of Christ our God,[68] who will guard all of us for the glory of His majesty, Amen.

This is why the Lord points out two paths to reason which masters the passions, both a narrow and a broad, the former leading towards salvation through behaving well in this life, but the other leads those who neglect the virtues towards destruction. Thus He proclaims: 'What I say to you in darkness, tell in the light.' For to contemplate what is wrong brings an image of the darkness which condemns those who have sinned; but choosing, through doing good, that which is good and just, is a witness of your virtue and life towards the deathless light to come. And so whenever we feel delight in this age and the world within it, strengthening pious reason let us turn away from every impassioned and sin-loving desire, emulating the toils of the saints for the sake of the glory which is prepared [for them] and indescribable promise, on account of which we should stay awake with petitions and fastings and be enslaved in righteousness[69] to the way of life of greatest virtue, being freed by the freedom of Christ our God, who will guard all of us for the glory of His majesty, with whom and to the Father with the Holy Spirit glory is now and for ever and for all eternity, <Amen>.

---

[66] Cf. Matthew 7:13–14. [67] Cf. Matthew 10:27. [68] Cf. Galatians 5:1.
[69] Cf. Romans 6:18.

Some general observations can be made. The sermons given in the *Life* and the sermon collection clearly have a far closer relationship to each other than they do to 4 Maccabees; there can be no suggestion that they were drawn independently from the biblical text. I will return to the relationship between the sermons and 4 Maccabees below. Generally, the version of the sermon in the sermons collection is longer and more elaborate than that in the *Life* (in particular, it contains more developed similes). Neither text is decisively 'better' than the other: on the one hand, parts of the sermon in the collection verge on the incomprehensible (as marked by italics), but on the other, at several points this version makes better sense than the text of the *Life*. Thus, for example, the exhortation in the last part of the sermon that we should 'turn away from every . . . desire, emulating the toils of the saints for the sake of the glory prepared [for them]', is more coherent than the comparable passage in the *Life*: 'let us turn away from every . . . desire, emulating the lives and toils of the saints and the glory which is prepared for them.' It seems more comprehensible to urge the audience to emulate the toils 'for the sake of' the glory, rather than, like the *Life*, to urge them to emulate the glory itself. In any case, little can be achieved by efforts to show which text makes better sense: even if one were clearly more logical than the other, this would not prove the direction of the relationship between them. The more logical text could be the original, from which the later version has been corrupted, but it could, equally plausibly, represent a later effort to make sense of a confused and difficult original.

The question remains, therefore, of what relationship the *Life* and the sermon collection bear to each other. Van den Ven argued that neither text could be directly dependent upon the other, because if it were, the author would have utilized more of the material available to him (it is notable that the above three examples appear to be the only instances of the texts' interdependence, despite both works being fairly lengthy).[70] He suggested, in consequence, that both texts drew on an earlier, no longer extant, record of Symeon's sermons preserved at his monastery. In his view, given the verbal parallels between some of the passages just cited, both the relevant passages of the *Life* and the extant sermon collection must be closely based on this original collection (which I shall refer to as Ur-Sermons). He thinks, however, that Symeon's hagiographer was more faithful to Ur-Sermons than was the redactor of the extant sermon collection. His argument is based on stylistic grounds: he contrasts 'la simplicité spontanée, la clarté et la logique de l'exposé' of the passages in the *Life* with 'le maniérisme lourd, l'absence de cohésion et d'équilibre, la verbosité, la recherche souvent peu heureuse de l'effet, l'abus des comparaisons, la médiocrité pour tout dire, qui déparent l'autre texte [i.e. the sermon collection]'.[71] The stylite, in his opinion, could not possibly have preached in such bad style; it must have been the work of a subsequent editor, who rewrote the whole collection.

[70] Van den Ven 1957, pp. 30–2. [71] Ibid. p. 31.

Van den Ven's arguments here are, however, problematic. First, it is not clear that his argument that neither text can be dependent on the other holds water. While it is true that it is surprising that the parallels are so few, this problem is not resolved by proposing the existence of the Ur-Sermons collection, as the same question remains: why did the two authors, although using the same source material (which Van den Ven implies would have been of roughly the same length as the extant collection), only excerpt such a small number of comparable passages? While the existence of Ur-Sermons cannot be ruled out, it does not help to resolve this difficulty, and therefore is not a necessary hypothesis. Furthermore, his argument that the version of the sermons preserved in the *Life* is closer to the original than that in the sermons collection is based on little more than his preference for the style of the former. We cannot assume that Symeon (or whoever wrote the original version of the sermons) would have had a simple style, particularly if, as is possible, the sermons were originally composed in written form, rather than delivered extempore (or if they were rewritten after delivery). There is thus no positive evidence that the shorter version of the sermon in the *Life* is primary, and that in the sermon collection secondary.

Indeed, one piece of evidence suggests that in fact the longer version of the sermon is original. To analyse this, we must return to the above table comparing the two versions of the sermon on 'pious reason' to selected passages from 4 Maccabees. Although Van den Ven noted that the sermon was connected to Maccabees, he did not explore the parallels in any detail. As the table shows, in most instances of parallels between Maccabees and the Symeon sermon, the parallels are found in both versions of the sermon. Yet in one case, highlighted in bold in the table, we find an apparent parallel between the biblical text and the text in the sermon collection which has no parallel in the version of the sermon in the *Life*. Unfortunately, one phrase in the middle of the excerpt from the sermon is impossible to translate (as marked in italics). The general sense is, however, clear: the sermon-writer uses imagery of a tree with many offshoots, and later suggests that these offshoots are desires, and that reason can, through careful cultivation, dry them out; reason is thus presented as mastering the desires, in a horticultural image. This is very similar to the sense of the imagery in 4 Maccabees 1:28, although there are differences in details (the Maccabees text, which is much clearer, describes two plants, pleasure and pain, with many offshoots, which reason 'the master cultivator' weeds, prunes, and irrigates, thereby taming the emotions). In common with the other parallels between Maccabees and this sermon (also shown in the table), the similarities are largely at the level of concept rather than language, but both texts do use the unusual word '*παραφυάδες*' (offshoots). Given that the original sermon was clearly inspired by 4 Maccabees, and contains several such thematic parallels with the text, it is highly likely that this horticultural image was contained in the original version of the sermon. It does not appear at all in the shorter version of the sermon in the *Life*, and this

absence suggests that this text is a condensed form of the original; the hagiographer omitted the imagery of the plant/tree, perhaps reflecting his preference for a simpler style. The alternative interpretation, that the author of the sermon collection, when writing up the shorter version of the sermon in the *Life*, decided to add his own additional allusion to (but not direct citation from) 4 Maccabees, is much less likely. One example is not conclusive, but it does provide strong support to the view that the longer version of the sermons, as preserved in the sermon collection, represents an earlier version of the text.

It seems, then, that the version of the sermons as preserved in the collection is prior to that in the *Life* (although it may, like many ancient works, have undergone revisions in the processes of transmission and reuse). Given that the *Life* is itself likely to be an early text, compiled or written at Symeon's monastery reasonably soon after his death, this implies at the very least that the sermon collection had an early date and a strong connection with the same monastery; surely the author of the *Life* would not have accepted a collection written elsewhere as the authentic words of the saint.[72] It cannot be proven that Symeon himself was the author, rather than an early disciple of his, but it should be regarded as a strong possibility. At the very least, the collection was closely associated with his cult and monastery, and is as such eminently worthy of further stylistic and thematic examination.

Genre

Symeon's sermons are difficult to classify in terms of genre. They do not fit into some of the most prominent categories of the sermons of ecclesiastical preachers, being neither exegetical, festal, nor panegyrical.[73] They contain next to nothing to tie them to any particular event or occasion for preaching. In the main, they deal with moral themes, exhorting the audience to reform their behaviour in view of the coming Judgement. To show the range of topics covered, I give below a table showing the contents of the sermons, including both their titles in the manuscripts and my own brief summary of their key themes (the latter is important since the titles, as suggested above, may be later additions, and do not always reflect the contents of the sermon accurately).[74]

[72] On the date of the *Life of Symeon*, see below pp. 115–21.

[73] Cunningham and Allen note rightly that we should not be too concerned with classifying sermons into particular genres; many fall between several (Cunningham and Allen 1998, p. 19. Cf. also Mayer and Allen 2000, p. 29). Symeon's sermons sometimes have exegetical and panegyrical elements, but these are limited in scope and are never the main focus of any single discourse.

[74] Van den Ven provides a list of the Greek captions, with some minor variations from those printed by Mai, with a brief summary of their contents (Van den Ven 1957, pp. 13–16). I translate Van den Ven's text.

	Title (age delivered)[75]	Main themes
1	About the great benefactions of God (10)	The great goods prepared for the saints in heaven; Symeon's plea to Christ to count him among them
2	About self-control and faith and deeds (10)	Moral/spiritual themes; faith and works; faith, hope, and love
3	About emotions and thoughts (11)	Pious reason as master of the emotions
4	About asceticism, through visions of which he was deemed worthy, everything about which God laid bare and revealed to him to know in the purity of his heart (11)	The dangers demons pose to monks; monastic values
5	On the struggle of the prophets and apostles and martyrs (11)	The endurance of the prophets and martyrs
6	To a landowner of Antioch (12)	The lure of worldly pleasures and wealth; the eternal punishment for those who succumb to them
7	About repentance and compunction (12)	The power of repentance; Christ as doctor; the weight of sin
8	About those who are proud and sin fearlessly (12)	Danger of wealth and pride; need for renunciation; the errors of pagans and sins of pagan 'gods'; defence of icons
9	A teaching to monks about the specific deceptive appearance of the demons (13)	Demonic attacks on monks; speaker's visions of and encounters with demons
10	About the uncertainty of human life (13)	The transience of the earth; a painful death and eternal punishment for sinners; rewards for the virtuous
11	About the bad death of the sinner and the restful passing-away of the just (14)	Painful death of sinners and eternal punishment; rewards for the virtuous; call for repentance; futility of wealth and reputation
12	About the second coming of the Word God and the just retribution (14)	Last Judgement; punishment of the rich; reward of saints
13	About those who have fallen through pride away from the commands of God (14)	Punishment of the proud and greedy; importance of humility; inevitability of judgement
14	About the temporary and fanciful conceit of the rich and their condemnation at the tribunal of Christ (14)	Punishment of rich and rulers; exaltation of the poor; wicked behaviour of the rich
15	About those who deify the yoke of marriage (14)	Marriage/sex do not create children—God does; marriage is good, but virginity better
16	About those who are proud and sin fearlessly (15)	Sins of the rich; their future punishment; problems with their almsgiving; all men are brothers; harmonious vision of ideal social hierarchy
17	About the theatre of the saints in piety, from the example of worldly pleasures (15)	Comparison between actors/theatre and the pious; need for asceticism; coming judgement

Continued

[75] I have provided only short forms of the titles since most begin with the same formula: 'Homily of the holy abba Symeon the stylite of the monastery on the Wonderful Mountain, which God caused him to speak, like Daniel, through the Holy Spirit, about . . . .'

Continued

	Title (age delivered)	Main themes
18	About the army of the pious who through their better struggle please [God] (15)	Comparison between soldiers in service of mortal king and ascetics fighting for God; ascetic virtues; punishment in store for rich and worldly
19	About compunction and about virginity and divine love and error and the transience of life (16)	Transience of the world; virginity; eternal punishment for sinners
20	A teaching about divine grace, the governor of man (16)	Fragility of world; eternity of punishment; need for asceticism; divine providence; wickedness of oppressors
21	About the prepared Gehenna and about the good things which God has promised to the saints (16)	Eternal punishment for sinners; the virtue of the saints; the failings of many lazy monks; the different demons and their ways of attacking monks
22	About the soul at the exit from the body and the spirits which meet it, the powers of evil, and the praises of God and angels, and about those who are found in sins, through visions of which he was deemed worthy (17)	Pain of death; revelations about the soul's journey after leaving the body; moral failings of present generation; the joy for virtuous souls in heaven
23	About the active way of life of the monk (17)	Goals and dangers of monasticism; need for humility; eternal judgement
24	Exhortation towards a virgin (18)	Glory of virginity; true virginity requires all virtues
25	About the virtues and firmness of monks (21)	Monks equally/more virtuous than martyrs; demonic attacks on monks and their failure in face of monks' virtues
26	About part of the divine visions and revelations of which he was deemed worthy (23)	Futility of temporal world; eternal joy of heaven; need for continual search for God; weakness of Devil due to Christ's sacrifice; virtues and purity; the virtues of prophets, apostles, martyrs, and ascetics
27	Exhortation towards those who rave in despair and think that life will be ended with the flesh (23)	Transience of world; salvation of just and destruction of sinners; sinfulness of the monks of the current time
28	Ascetic [homily] (24)	Rewards of former holy fathers; sinfulness in store for current monks unless they repent; danger of ignoring the signs of God's anger
29	Exhortation towards those who say that they are ready for martyrdom but cannot tolerate a slight observation (24)	Current monks failing to live up to standards of former saints; monastic virtues; Christ's incarnation and our salvation
30	About visions of which he was deemed worthy (24)	God exhorting his followers; the end times; speaker's own knowledge of paradise; God the creator; saints in heaven; our current sinfulness

As the table suggests, a few of the sermons deal with particular virtues (such as sermon 24, on virginity), or particular vices (sermon 6 is one of several focused largely on love of wealth), but many lack a specific focus, either touching on a wide range of virtues and vices or simply exhorting the audience to reform in

generalized terms. Recurrent themes, which will be explored in more detail below, include asceticism, demonic attacks on monks, the wickedness of wealth, and eschatology. There is next to no formal theological or doctrinal content, and certainly no explicit reference to the Christological debates of the age.[76]

The sermons' structure is often loose, and the author's chain of thought difficult to follow. Sermon 2, for example, begins with an obscure sentence about solitary self-control, double virtue, and the triple crown; briefly refers to the image of pious reason as charioteer of the body developed at length in sermon 3; then discusses, at greater length, the need for both faith and deeds; it continues, with a rather clumsy transition, to argue that God is invisible to human eyes; and then moves on to discuss the 'triple virtue' of faith, hope, and love (perhaps echoing the single/double/triple language of the opening section, but in different terms); then briefly returns to the theme of faith and deeds before concluding. Some sermons are structured more clearly: sermon 5 begins with praise for the patient struggle of the prophets and martyrs; it then lists various persecuted figures from the Old and New Testaments and their afflictions; it discusses their courage in the face of hardship and persecution in more general terms, before ending by exhorting its audience to imitate their virtues. Several sermons have more distinctive structures: a few, for example, are based around extended similes (including sermons 17 and 18, which use similes of the theatre and of the army respectively, although in both cases the simile is abandoned in the final few paragraphs of the sermon).

In many respects, Symeon's sermons are most reminiscent of the 'ethical' discourses of various ascetic authors.[77] There are many structural, stylistic, and thematic parallels between his works and those of famous monastic authors such as Evagrios of Pontus, Isaiah of Scetis, and Dorotheos of Gaza, including his interest in demonic attacks on monks and more generally the lack of a specific festal or exegetical focus for the works. Yet there are important differences between Symeon's work and most of these ascetic collections. First, Symeon's collection is unusually homogeneous, in that all of it is written in homiletic form. To my knowledge, homogeneous, purely homiletic collections by ascetic authors are rare. The so-called 'Discourses' of Isaiah of Scetis, for example, contain many texts in homily form, but also various other genres, including lists of precise instructions, records of 'sayings' by the holy man in the style of the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, lamentations, and letters.[78] Evagrios's ethical corpus

[76] On this theme in relation to Symeon's cult, see below pp. 126–34.

[77] Cf. Allen 1998, p. 208; Cunningham and Allen 1998, p. 7.

[78] Admittedly, there is no clear distinction between these genres; some texts seem to combine elements of several. For general discussion of the Discourses of Isaiah of Scetis (which are still in need of a detailed scholarly study) see the introductions to the French translation (the Monks of Solesmes 1970, pp. 3–41) and to the English translation (Chryssavgis and Penkett 2002, pp. 13–37). There is as yet no critical edition of Isaiah's works, and both translators base their texts on unpublished manuscripts; I therefore cite the English translation directly.

includes lists of proverbs/maxims, letters, and instructions, as well as many sermon-style discourses.[79] Given the difficulties of distinguishing between these genres, and of knowing how these authors' corpora were transmitted, this point should not perhaps be pressed too far. Yet another, more important, difference between Symeon's sermons and these ascetic collections remains. The most characteristic ascetic collections appear to be targeted exclusively at monks, and therefore deal only with topics of direct relevance to them. Some of Symeon's sermons do likewise presuppose a monastic audience, as is made clear in sermon 28: 'O monks, let us lament being called monks. We have not remained monks, since we have consorted with the works of the demons.'[80] Yet other passages imply that the audience for at least some of the sermons included lay people.[81] In particular, the many sections containing detailed attacks on the rich and their luxurious lifestyles are far more reminiscent of the preaching of John Chrysostom to his Antiochene and Constantinopolitan congregations than of the ascetic discourses mentioned above.[82] When monastic authors discuss the dangers of wealth, it tends to be with reference to monastic concerns: they urge monks, for example, not to insist on a high price for their handiwork, not to accumulate wealth for almsgiving, and not to worry about saving money to look after themselves when they are sick, or too old to work.[83] Symeon's evocation, and condemnation, of the luxurious lives of wealthy lay people is of a very different nature. In sermon 14, for example, he reproaches a rich man:

> For in luxury of foods you nourish your flesh into food for the unsleeping worm; and saluting the one above you in wealth, on account of a perishable semblance, you set at naught the pauper, who is justified in the Lord; and you besmirch your couch in bedding other men's wives and in sleeping with transgressive men. And you look at yourself as if you possessed a deathless head, dressed in soft garments, and elevating your desires in dances of women, and in fantasies of having attendants on both sides, in sitting on horses, in overlooking the poor, and in

[79] Evagrios's works have received uneven scholarly treatment: some still lack good critical editions, while others have been much better served. Sinkewicz discusses all the works in his English translation thereof (Sinkewicz 2003). In what follows I use, for convenience, the English titles to the works provided by Sinkewicz.

[80] *ὦ μοναχοὶ, κλαύσωμεν μοναχοὶ καλούμενοι· μοναχοὶ οὐκ ἐμείναμεν συμπολιτευσάμενοι τοῖς ἔργοις τῶν δαιμόνων*: sermon 28.2 (p. 142).

[81] See Van den Ven 1957, p. 18 (although he relies perhaps too much on the captions to the sermons—for the dangers of this, see above pp. 63–4).

[82] On these passages, see below pp. 98–110.

[83] For not insisting on a high price for handiwork, see e.g. Isaiah of Scetis, *Ascetic Discourses* 4 (trans. pp. 58–9). For not accumulating wealth for almsgiving, see e.g. Evagrios of Pontus, *Foundations* 4 (col. 1256) (and compare also Evagrios, *On Thoughts* 21 (p. 226)). For not saving money for sickness/old age, see e.g. Evagrios of Pontus, *Praktikos* 9 (II, p. 512); compare also Isaiah of Scetis, *Ascetic Discourses* 17 (trans. p. 131).

> blasphemous words and purchasing of beauty, besides the other things which you do which it is shameful even to speak of.[84]

I will discuss his treatment of wealth in more detail below, but it will suffice for now to note, first, that it distinguishes his work from that of many of his ascetic predecessors, and, second, that it suggests that his audience included laymen as well as monks. This in turn may imply that the sermons were delivered orally, rather than being intended solely as reading material for the monks of his monastery, although it is likely that they also served the latter function.[85]

Style

The style of the sermon collection has met with heavy criticism. As mentioned above, Van den Ven argued that their style was so poor that they could not have been written by Symeon himself. Allen has agreed with this verdict, referring to the collection's 'tortuous and obscure style'.[86] Because of this, and because of their belief that Symeon's collection was heavily redacted by an anonymous editor, neither has analysed the work's style in detail.[87] The validity of their criticisms can, at one level, hardly be denied; the sermons' phraseology is over-elaborate and difficult at best, and sometimes entirely incomprehensible, even if some of these obscurities are products of textual corruption. Yet it is clear that their author used a variety of rhetorical techniques in his writing, including many of those identified by Cunningham as common aids to an audience's comprehension of preaching.[88] The following analysis will, therefore, attempt to understand the sermons' style in terms of Symeon's rhetorical strategies, setting to one side its lack of appeal to modern ears.

Symeon uses a range of techniques to attract his audience's attention. Several of his sermons have vivid or dramatic openings surely intended to pique the

[84] *ἐν γὰρ σπατάλῃ βρωμάτων ἐκτρέφεις σου τὰς σάρκας εἰς βρῶμα τοῦ ἀκοιμέτου σκώληκος· καὶ ἀσπαζόμενος τὸν ὑπὲρ σὲ ἐν χρυσίῳ, ἕνεκεν φαντασίας φθαρτῆς, ἐξουθενεῖς πένητα δεδικαιωμένον παρὰ τῷ θεῷ· μιαίνεις δὲ τὴν στρωμνὴν ἐν κοίταις γυναικῶν ἀλλοτρίων καὶ συγ[κα]θευδήσει ἀνδρῶν παρανόμων. <καὶ> ἀφορᾷς εἰς ἑαυτὸν ὡς ἀθάνατον κεφαλὴν κεκτημένος, ἐν μαλακοῖς ἱματίοις ἠμφιεσμένος, καὶ μετεωρίζων ἐπιθυμίας σου ἐν ὀρχέμασι θηλύων, καὶ φαντασίᾳ ῥαβδούχων ἑκατέρωθεν, καθίσμασι ἵππων, παροράσει πτωχῶν, καὶ βλασφήμοις λόγοις, καὶ ἐξαγορασμοῖς κάλλους, παρεκτὸς τῶν λοιπῶν ὧν διαπράττεις ἅτινα αἰσχρόν ἐστι καὶ τὸ λέγειν*: sermon 14.2 (p. 64), re-punctuated, and *<καὶ>* after *παρανόμων* added, by me.

[85] In general, as with many early Christian sermon collections, there is little evidence to show whether the works were actually preached; for the difficulties of distinguishing between preached homilies and 'desk homilies' see above pp. 57–8.

[86] Allen 1998, p. 205.

[87] As discussed above, I do not deny the possibility that the sermons were edited during transmission, but I do not, like Van den Ven, regard this as a certainty.

[88] Cunningham 1995, pp. 72ff., 1997, pp. 25ff. Hartney makes a similar argument with particular reference to the sermons of John Chrysostom: Hartney 2004, p. 47.

audience's interest, such as, 'the beauty of life is an uncertain loveliness, and the decoration of houses is a passing shadow';[89] 'the blood of the martyr is not more venerable than the way of life of the monk';[90] 'I think that the earthly world should be considered a ship carried round by waves of the sea and whirled hither and thither.'[91] Throughout the collection, his use of imagery is varied and extensive, if rarely original, and again serves to add interest to his words. Some of the images appear deliberately shocking, or paradoxical, a technique which Averil Cameron has identified as characteristic of early Christian literature:[92] thus, for example, in sermon 17 he compares both himself and his audience, and, subsequently, God, to a prostitute adorning herself for her clients.[93] Sometimes he presents a rapid series of diverse metaphors and similes, as in the opening of sermon 27:

> Brothers, this world is a cloud of iniquity, dissolving frost, a passing dream, a sketch being wiped out, a turning point of the horse race, a slanting [?] shadow, a wind of words, a succession of mortals' glory, an invisible corruptor of those who live in it, a cauldron or abyss, like a cauldron boiling up fire of the impious from eternity. For it appears like a pestle, to dissolve everybody in the earthly mist, and a passing dew.[94]

The quick-fire sequence of images is varied and engaging. The most extended series of images comes in the middle of sermon 4, which consists of a long string of statements of bipartite structure, one half of which introduces an image, and the other half a supposedly comparable phenomenon from the life of the monk. Thus for example, 'a sheep which sheds its wool is useless to its owner, and a monk shorn without the psalmody does not build for God'.[95] This passage contains an extremely varied range of images, including a temple, a tomb, a treasury, an altar, a good worker, a clever merchant, a trumpet, charcoal, wax and fire, thorns, a fisherman, a garden, a ship, birds, wine, olive oil, a lion, a goat, a star, a reed in the wind, a stream, a house, a missile, a sword, a shepherd, wood, a fox in the vineyard, a sparrow, a partridge, a dog, a pigeon, a metal-worker, a pot, deer, senators, a weaver, a gem-engraver, moths and a cloak, the moon, torches, a

[89] *τὸ κάλλος τοῦ βίου, ὡραιότης ἄδηλος· καὶ ὁ τῶν οἰκιῶν κόσμος, σκιὰ παρατρέχουσα*: sermon 10.1 (p. 45).

[90] *μαρτυρίου αἷμα οὐ τιμιώτερον τῆς τοῦ μοναχοῦ πολιτείας*: sermon 25.1 (p. 125).

[91] *σκάφος οἶμαι νοεῖσθαι τὸν περίγειον κόσμον περιφερόμενον ὑπὸ κυμάτων θαλάσσης καὶ τῇδε κἀκεῖσε δονούμενον*: sermon 20.1 (p. 98).

[92] A. M. Cameron 1991a, pp. 155–88.

[93] Sermon 17.2–3 (pp. 82–3).

[94] *ἀδελφοί, ὁ κόσμος οὗτος, νέφος ἀνομίας τυγχάνει, πάχνη λυομένη, ἐνύπνιον διαβαῖνον, σκιογραφία λειουμένη, ῥοπὴ ἱπποδρομίου, σκιὰ κεκλεκυῖα* [?: I have translated *κεκλικυῖα*], *ἄνεμος λόγων, διαδοχὴ δόξης ἀνθρώπων, ἄδηλος οἰκητόρων φθορεύς, λέβης ἢ ἄβυσσος ὡς χαλκεῖον ἐξ αἰῶνος ἀναβράζων πῦρ ἀσεβῶν· ὅτι ὡς τριβεὺς πέφηνε τοὺς ἅπαντας τῇ γηΐνῳ διαλύειν ὁμίχλῃ, καὶ δρόσος παροδεύουσα*: sermon 27.1 (p. 137).

[95] *πρόβατον ἀπόρριπτον τὰ ἔρια ἀνωφελὲς τῷ κεκτημένῳ, καὶ μοναχὸς κειράμενος ἄνευ ψαλμῳδίας οὐκ οἰκοδομεῖ εἰς Θεόν*: sermon 4 (p. 51).

blood-stained cloak, a falcon, childbirth, mourning, beauty, an angry man, a lascivious youth, various body parts, a wolf, a river, and a vine. None of the metaphors are developed in detail; the power of the passage comes from the diversity and sometimes unexpectedness of the parallels.

In contrast, in other sermons Symeon uses long, developed similes. Sermon 18, for example, contains a lengthy elaboration upon the common comparison between the Christian and the soldier.[96] He starts the sermon by recounting the imagined words of a commander to his soldiers (thereby using another technique intended to add vividness: direct speech) and by emphasizing the soldiers' willingness to die for honour and gifts. He then launches into a series of comparisons emphasizing that 'we' (himself and his audience) should be more committed to strive for Christ than the soldiers for their king. Since the soldiers are prepared to die for a mortal king, we should mortify our bodies for the immortal king; as soldiers are aggressive to their enemies, but calm to their companions, so we should attack the demons, but be kind to our fellow Christians; whereas soldiers wear 'covetous' outfits (cloaks, fur, necklaces), we wear 'pious' clothes (animal skins, hair tunics, dog-collars); just as soldiers gain promotions through their efforts, we may through virtue become rulers of the angels; whereas soldiers' weapons are physical and destructive, ours are spiritual and life-giving (dedication, the spirit of blessedness, faith and action, prayer, the Cross, and Paul like a general urging us to fight); whereas a mortal king cannot save his soldier if he is killed, Christ can save us if we are endangered by demons; soldiers have rotten camps, but we have eternal tents; soldiers eat meat preserved in vinegar, but our food is soberness and the Eucharist. This is clearly not a simple simile, as it relies as much on the differences between the two points of comparison (for example, the mortal versus immortal king; luxurious outfits versus ascetic trappings; physical versus spiritual weapons) as on their similarities. Its purpose is didactic and exhortatory, and it conveys a similar message to many of Symeon's other sermons; by using this extended image he can present the material in a different and perhaps more engaging fashion. While, therefore, most of the images used in the sermon collection are in themselves conventional, the variety of ways in which they are deployed is noteworthy: the author appears to possess a modicum of sophistication in his rhetorical technique.

Imagery is not the only means he uses to emphasize and dramatize his message. In several sermons he repeats key phrases, a technique intended to reinforce a point and, perhaps, to aid audience comprehension.[97] Rhetorical questions abound. Some are neutral, intended merely to advance the speaker's argument in an engaging manner, such as, 'and so what? After old age does God abandon

[96] An image ultimately derived from the New Testament, esp. Ephesians 6:13–18.

[97] Cf. Cunningham 1995, pp. 72ff., 1997, pp. 25ff. For anaphora in Symeon's sermons, see e.g. sermon 10.3 with its series of laments beginning with the word 'alas [οὐαί]' (p. 47).

man? May it not be!'[98] and 'do you want to understand what the unquenchable fire is like for the second death?'.[99] Others, however, have an accusatory tone, as illustrated by the beginning of sermon 19: 'why do you desire corruptible and temporal things in this unprofitable life, gathering bitterness through vanishing pleasure?'[100] Many of these reproachful questions occur in the context of Symeon's addresses to, and dialogues with, probably hypothetical individuals. The apostrophe is one of his most characteristic rhetorical strategies, occurring in more than ten of the sermons.[101] His apostrophes come in a variety of forms and lengths; sometimes Symeon abruptly breaks off from his previous discourse to address an individual; sometimes he describes a person's thoughts in the third person before beginning to address them in the second person; and on other occasions he uses procatalepsis, imagining a question or an objection which a member of the audience might raise, and proceeding to answer or refute it. Many of these apostrophes are targeted at a wealthy person, who is often addressed in the vocative as 'money-lover' (*φιλάργυρε*) or 'rich man' (*πλούσιε*);[102] some are simply directed to 'man' (*ἄνθρωπε*) or use the second-person singular form of the verb without an accompanying vocative. An apostrophe in sermon 21, uniquely, is addressed to a monk wishing to be saved.[103]

As Karl-Heinz Uthemann has argued, such apostrophes can serve an important role in homiletic rhetoric, because they enable the speaker to render his sermon more conversational, giving the audience a sense of involvement in a dialogue, even though in fact the preacher is delivering a monologue.[104] It is notable that Symeon rarely uses the second-person plural to address his audience; he favours either the second-person singular, in these apostrophes, or the first-person plural (either in the indicative, for example, 'we have given our way of life to darkness', or in the hortatory subjunctive, as in 'let us grieve, most desired ones, and let us mourn bitterly').[105] The second person, singular or plural, implicitly distances the speaker from those whom he is addressing, and thus is particularly appropriate for delivering stern reproaches and commands. In contrast, the first-person plural is, even when used to highlight the same failings, less harsh, since the orator includes himself in the community who needs to reform.[106] His frequent use of the first-person plural thus enables Symeon to stress the need for moral reform without alienating his audience by opposing himself, as virtuous, and them, as sinners. The

[98] *Τί οὖν; μετὰ τὸ γήρας ἐγκαταλείπει ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον; μὴ γένοιτο*: sermon 8.2 (p. 28).

[99] *Θέλεις δὲ τὸ πῦρ ἄσβεστον, ὁποῖόν ἐστι πρὸς δευτέραν τελευτὴν θεωρῆσαι*; sermon 21.2 (p. 104).

[100] *Τί τὰ φθαρτὰ καὶ πρόσκαιρα ἐν τῷ ἀνωφελεῖ τούτῳ βίῳ ἐπιθυμεῖτε, διὰ τῆς ἀφανοῦς ἡδονῆς πικρασμὸν συνάγοντες*; sermon 19.1 (p. 93).

[101] Sermons 2, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 21, and 29.

[102] For discussion of many of these passages, see below pp. 98–110.

[103] Sermon 21.9 (pp. 110–11).

[104] Uthemann 1998, pp. 143ff.

[105] *τῷ σκότει δεδώκαμεν τὴν διατριβὴν ἡμῶν*: sermon 28.1 (p. 141); *κλαύσωμεν ὦ ποθητοὶ καὶ πενθήσωμεν πικρῶς*: sermon 28.3 (p. 142).

[106] On John Chrysostom's use of the first-person plural, see Cook 2019, p. 195.

use of the second-person singular in the apostrophe may at one level perform a similar function: it enables the speaker to use aggressive invective, highlighting the punishments in store for unrepentant sinners, without estranging his entire audience, because this polemic is targeted at an individual (usually, as mentioned, a rich individual with whom most of the audience would not have identified).

Indeed, Symeon rhetorically breaks down the barriers between himself, as authoritative preacher, and his audience, by stressing his own sinfulness and humility. His humility is expressed, implicitly, throughout the collection. As mentioned, he frequently uses the first-person plural to include himself in the community which he is addressing, even when he is highlighting that community's sinfulness. Thus in sermon 28, apparently addressed to monks, he laments 'our' wicked deeds and fall from virtue:

> Having been called chaste, we have become fornicators; polluting divine freedom by our deeds, we have strengthened hate and falseness. And because of this no truth shines in us. Monks, let us lament being called monks. We have not remained monks, since we have consorted with the works of the demons. Christ called us hypocrites . . . our lamps are quenched, our talent is hidden, the heavenly master comes from above . . . how will we defend ourselves, or what will we say to him? . . . there is no defence in us. For despite being shaped in piety, we have renounced it . . . alas, that every day we behave disgracefully in the cities.[107]

He includes himself in actions which he could not have committed, such as disgraceful behaviour in the cities. These passages serve both to emphasize the speaker's sense of communal identification with his monks and to show his humility, since he confesses his shared sinfulness.

Symeon, however, moves beyond these communal professions of guilt. In several passages in the sermons, he uses the first-person singular, addressing his own moral state, often in negative terms. Thus in sermon 10 he moves from a discussion, in the third person, of the transience of life, to a more personal passage:

> I know myself to be drying hay . . . . For just as in season hay, although existing today, tomorrow is thrown into an oven, thus also death drags everyone with piteous tears to their necessary end; and the delaying of repentance deceives me for a time; when I think on my sin, I fear to die. When I repent, pleasures pass me

[107] *ἁγνοὶ ἐπικληθέντες, πόρνοι καθεστήκαμεν, πράξεσι βεβηλοῦντες τὴν θείαν ἐλευθερίαν, μῖσος καὶ ψεῦδος ἐνισχύσαμεν· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἐν ἡμῖν οὐδὲν λάμπει ἀληθείας· ὦ μοναχοί, κλαύσωμεν μοναχοὶ καλούμενοι· μοναχοὶ οὐκ ἐμείναμεν συμπολιτευσάμενοι τοῖς ἔργοις τῶν δαιμόνων· ἡμᾶς ὁ Χριστὸς ἔλεγεν ὑποκριτὰς . . . αἱ λαμπάδες ἡμῶν ἐσβέσθησαν, τὸ τάλαντον κέκρυπται, ὁ οὐράνιος δεσπότης ἄνωθεν . . . ἔρχεται· τί ἀπολογησόμεθα, ἢ τί ἐροῦμεν αὐτῷ; . . . ἀπολογία ἐν ἡμῖν οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεμία· μορφούμενοι γὰρ ἐν θεοσεβείᾳ, ταύτην ἀπηρνησάμεθα . . . Οἴμοι, ὅτι καθ' ἑκάστην ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν ἀσχημονοῦμεν*: sermon 28.2–4 (pp. 142–3).

> by; I have old age in mind, and death's tomb drags me, naked of the commands and unready, to judgement. I was fashioned as a brick, and after a time I am dissolved, and I go away to the earth from which I was taken. I was revealed a flourishing tree, and marred by old age, I am cut down for burning. I am whitened grain, and am harvested by the angels who wield scythes. O my soul, be afraid of the fire-bearing servants who are coming to you at your necessary end; and acquire as friends through renunciation those who do not flatter, before the twelfth hour. Oh my soul, respect repentance in life, lest afterwards you fall to the enemy.[108]

This passage clearly continues the sermon's earlier theme of the ephemerality of life. But by moving to the first person, Symeon transforms the tone of his discourse. The use of the first person creates an intimate effect; it gives the impression (whether true or not) that the speaker is baring his innermost thoughts to his audience. He dwells not only on his own impermanence but also on his own sense of his sin ('when I think on my sin, I fear to die'; 'the tomb of death drags me naked of commands and unready . . . '), again suggesting his personal humility and self-abasement.

What does this humility achieve? First, humility, as manifested in particular by an awareness of one's own sins, was considered one of the key Christian and monastic virtues.[109] As a result, Symeon's emphasis on his sinfulness, far from undermining his authority as a moral teacher, in fact serves to increase it; paradoxically, for a monk to speak about his sins demonstrated that he was a paradigm of virtue.[110] Secondly, Symeon's first-person passages have a strongly didactic purpose. By presenting himself as sinful—even though, to much of his audience, he must have appeared as a holy man of exemplary piety—and in need of God's mercy (many of the sermons end with Symeon's personal appeals to God to save him, or with instructions to his own soul to repent), he implicitly invites his listeners to compare themselves to him, to acknowledge their own sins, and, like him, to ask God for forgiveness.[111] By referring to his own sinfulness in very

[108] *ἀλλ' ἐγὼ οἶδα ἐμαυτὸν χόρτον ξηραινόμενον . . . . ὃν τρόπον γὰρ κατὰ καιρὸν ὁ χόρτος, σήμερον ὤν, αὔριον εἰς κλίβανον βάλλεται, οὕτως καὶ ὁ θάνατος ἐλεεινοῖς δάκρυσι πρὸς τὴν ἀνάγκην πάντας ἐφέλκεται· καὶ ἡ ἀναβολὴ τῆς μετανοίας πρὸς καιρὸν ἀπατᾷ με· ὅταν ἐννοῶ μου τὸ πταῖσμα, δειλιῶ τὸ θανεῖν·καὶ ὅταν μετανοῶ, τὰ τερπνά με διαβαίνει, καὶ τὸ γῆρας ἔχοντός μου κατὰ νοῦν, ἡ ταφή με τοῦ θανάτου γυμνὸν τῶν ἐντολῶν καὶ ἀνέτοιμον ἕλκει πρὸς τὴν κρίσιν· πλίνθος ἐπλάσθην, καὶ μετὰ χρόνον λύομαι, καὶ εἰς γῆν ἐξ ἧς ἐλήφθην, ἀπέρχομαι· φυτὸν ἀνεδείχθην εὐθαλὲς, καὶ ἐκ τῆς παλαίοτητος διαφθαρεὶς ἐκκόπτομαι πρὸς κατάκαυσιν. σῖτος εἰμὶ λευκανθεὶς, καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν δρεπανιστῶν ἀγγέλων θερίζομαι· δειλίασον ὦ ψυχή μου τοὺς πυρφόρους λειτουργοὺς, τοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀνάγκῃ ἐρχομένος ἐπὶ σέ· καὶ τοὺς ἀκολακεύτους κτῆσαι φίλους διὰ τῆς ἀποταγῆς, πρὸ τῆς δωδεκάτης ὥρας· αἰδέσθητι ὦ ψυχή μου ἐν ζωῇ μετανοεῖν, ἵνα μὴ μετέπειτα ὑποπέσῃς τῷ ἐχθρῷ*: sermon 10.2 (p. 46).

[109] See e.g. Burton-Christie 1993, pp. 236–58.

[110] Cf. Schroeder 2007, p. 52, who refers to 'the common ascetic practice of status negotiation through the rhetoric of humility'.

[111] Sermons 15.8 (p. 73), 19.6 (p. 98), 20.6 (p. 102), 24.3 (p. 124), 27.4 (p. 140), 28.4 (pp. 143–4), and 29.6 (p. 148).

generalized terms, he provides an opportunity for every member of his audience to reflect on his (or her?) own particular faults.[112] His self-criticisms therefore act as another indirect, non-aggressive way of highlighting the misdeeds of his audience.[113]

Symeon's presentation of himself as a humble sinner thus serves multiple ends: it renders his preaching more intense and intimate; it subtly serves to enhance his own position of moral authority; and it provides a non-aggressive method of encouraging his audience to repent. Even if Symeon's sermons are far from rhetorically brilliant, they are thus nonetheless quite didactically sophisticated. The speaker conveys his moral messages in ways that extend far beyond direct instruction, while his emphasis on humility serves both to break down the barrier between preacher and audience, and, at the same time, to increase his spiritual authority. Humility is only one aspect of Symeon's self-presentation. He also, perhaps paradoxically, presents himself as the recipient of divine visions and as an experienced combatant against the demons.[114] In order to understand this, however, we must turn to an analysis of one of the key themes of the collection: the spiritual life of the monk, and his constant war with the forces of evil.

Demons and Monks

Warnings and advice to monks are one of the dominant themes of Symeon's sermons. This is far from surprising; as the hegumen of his monastery, the provision of spiritual guidance to his monks must have been one of his key duties, and an essential source of his authority.[115] The advice and exhortations which the preacher gives to his monastic audience are often quite generalized, and rarely original: earlier ascetic authors such as Evagrios of Pontus and Isaiah of Scetis had treated similar monastic topics, sometimes in more sophisticated ways. But Symeon's sermons derive power from his claims to have first-hand experiential knowledge of the subjects he discusses: he presents himself as an experienced and effective combatant with the demons. The sermons thus suggest that Symeon's

[112] There is nothing in the sermons to suggest that Symeon had a female audience in mind, but if his audience did include pilgrims to his shrine, some women would presumably have been present; his Life depicts him receiving many female supplicants in person: see e.g. *Life of Symeon* 48 (p. 45), 101 (pp. 78–9), 118–19 (pp. 96–9), 138–40 (pp. 129–30), 154 (p. 137), 181 (pp. 160–1), 200 (pp. 175–6), 213 (p. 182), 243 (pp. 217–18), 252 (p. 220). This contrasts with Symeon Stylites the Elder, whose enclosure women were forbidden from entering (Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *History of the Monks of Syria* 26.21 (II, pp. 202–4); Antonios, *Life of Symeon* 14, 23, 25 (pp. 36–8, 56–8, 58–60); Evagrios Scholastikos 1.14 (p. 24).

[113] A rhetorical strategy described by Leontios of Neapolis in his *Life of John the Almsgiver* 42 (pp. 393–4).

[114] See Brakke 2006, p. 238, on the 'paradoxical circle of humility and achievement' in ascetic writings.

[115] See below pp. 138–9.

authority over his monks derived not merely from his moral guidance but from his personal status as a powerful and charismatic ascetic. This in turn implies that Symeon's authority might become vulnerable if he failed to meet his monks' expectations of him as a potent visionary. The sermons do contain references to monastic dissent, warning monks against the dangers of rivalry with their brothers and of vainly leaving their monasteries to found their own. The *Life of Symeon* may provide context for these warnings, since it confirms that Symeon faced various challenges from within his monastery. The sermon collection thus gives important insights into how Symeon constructed his authority within the monastery, but also hints at the potential vulnerabilities and frailties of his position.

It is not always possible to distinguish which sermons in Symeon's collection were intended in particular for monks. Many address general subjects applicable to both monks and laity, and may indeed have had mixed audiences. Some, however, are explicitly addressed to monks or deal with themes of especial relevance to them, such as virginity, asceticism, and demonic attacks.[116] Before looking at the sermons' teaching for monks in detail, it is worth briefly considering what the collection does *not* include. It is notable that the advice given is almost all at a spiritual level; we do not encounter the kinds of instructions about everyday monastic life that are common in the 'monastic rules' found both in early ascetic literature and in some saints' Lives, including, in fact, the *Life of Symeon the Younger*. Chapter 27 of Symeon's Life contains a long sermon apparently delivered by the stylite in his youth, which gives some specific instructions on proper monastic behaviour. It repeats the phrase 'the boast of the monk [is]', listing many standard attributes of Syrian monasticism, such as ceaseless psalming and prayer, and weeping and striking the breast.[117] It is clearly concerned with a coenobitic existence, providing advice, for instance, on behaviour at communal meals: listeners are told not to say 'give me something to drink' when thirsty, but to signal to the server with their finger, and not to spit out phlegm at the table 'to scandalize the brothers' but to leave and do it discreetly before returning.[118] They are not extreme ascetic rules, but more moderate ones suitable for a community.[119]

In some respects they are very similar to other monastic instructions attributed to earlier ascetics: Isaiah of Scetis also, for instance, orders monks sitting with their brethren not to spit in their presence but to go outside.[120] But the instructions attributed to Symeon seem to reflect their Syrian context: unlike Isaiah's text they do not contain, for example, references to manual labour, which was deemed

[116] Sermons explicitly referring to monks include 4 (pp. 47–55), 9 (pp. 37–45), 21 (pp. 103–11), 23 (pp. 118–21), 25 (pp. 125–7), 28 (pp. 140–4), although many others contain themes which seem of particular relevance to monks.

[117] *καύχημα μοναχοῦ*: *Life of Symeon* 27 (pp. 23–5). See Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 212*.

[118] *Δός μοι πιεῖν*: *Life of Symeon* 27 (p. 27); *σκανδαλίσαι τοὺς ἀδελφούς*: ibid. 27 (p. 27).

[119] Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 166*.

[120] Isaiah of Scetis, *Ascetic Discourses* 3 (trans. p. 48).

spiritually vital in many Egyptian monasteries.[121] Did these instructions really derive from the stylite? This is certainly possible, given that, as discussed above, the author of the *Life* does seem to have drawn on earlier records of the stylite's sermons; these instructions could therefore be derived from a now-lost source. Whether authentic or not, it is unsurprising that they are not included in the sermon collection, which rarely addresses direct commands to its audience, and only occasionally deals with practical issues of day-to-day life. Its focus, rather, is on the spiritual battles underlying the monastic existence. It is now time to examine the collection's spiritual teaching for monks in more depth.

Several of the sermons exalt characteristically monastic virtues, including virginity and asceticism. In sermon 15, about those who 'deify' marriage, Symeon insists that it is not marriage or sex that engender children, but God, and asserts that while marriage is good, virginity is better.[122] In sermon 24, on virginity, he claims that the virgin will be a lord in heaven: 'and if a sinning man has been appointed lord of all visible things, by how much more will the one who has perfected his controlled way of life in virginity [?], wearing a crown, lead a procession, and be lord in God's ineffable treasuries of incorruptible things?'[123] He proceeds to state that chastity does not constitute true virginity unless it is adorned with other virtues: fasting, restraint from elaborate foods, mildness, walking in peace, prayer and psalmody, piety and sobriety. This reflects his general tendency to blur the lines between different virtues (and indeed different sins); this might be interpreted as indicating a lack of clarity of thought, but is perhaps better understood as reflecting an integrated, holistic approach to morality; no individual virtue can be perfect in isolation.

Asceticism was, for the preacher, another crucial virtue. While the instructions in the *Life* might suggest that Symeon preached a moderate message to his monks, not expecting them to emulate his own severe asceticism, several passages in the sermons suggest that he did promote a certain degree of rigour.[124] He repeatedly stresses the importance of adhering to the 'utmost asceticism', on one occasion stating that the monk must always think of new ways to afflict himself:[125]

> Such is the life of the monk; and along with these virtues to think up other afflictions for his body, like the martyrs, according to [his] ability. For just as the

[121] This is not to say that Symeon's monks did not work with their hands (they did perform at least some agricultural tasks: see below, p. 144), but rather that manual labour did not usually possess the same ideological significance in Syria as it had come, in general, to possess in Egypt. For a nuanced discussion of the role of manual labour versus alternative forms of asceticism, see Caner 2002, esp. pp. 19–49.

[122] Sermon 15, esp. 15.7 (pp. 72–3).

[123] *καὶ εἰ ἁμαρτάνων ἄνθρωπος τῶν ὁρωμένων πάντων κύριος κατέστη, πόσῳ κρεῖττον τὸ* [? *ὁ*] *κατὰ παρθενίαν ἐγκρατεῖ* [? *ἐγκρατῆ*] *βίον τελέσας, στεφανηφορῶν πομπεύσει, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀρρήτοις τοῦ θεοῦ ταμιείοις τῶν ἀφθάρτων δεσπόσει*: sermon 24.1 (p. 122).

[124] For his encouragement of asceticism, see e.g. sermon 7.5 (p. 27), 17.1 (p. 82), 18.2 (p. 88).

[125] *ἀκροτάτῃ ἀσκήσει*: sermon 17.1 (p. 82), 18.2 (p. 88).

> sea, receiving all the rivers, is never full, until the heaven and earth grow old, thus the monk ought to be insatiable in always imposing trials on himself until his exit from the body.[126]

Admittedly, this exhortation includes the concessive clause, 'according to his ability', but it nonetheless suggests that constant asceticism was a requirement for all monks. Elsewhere he repeats this association between monks and martyrs, implying that the former had to match the physical struggles of the latter.[127] Nowhere in the sermons do we find the kinds of warnings against the dangers associated with extreme asceticism that are relatively common in monastic literature.[128] Although he was addressing coenobitic monks, he nonetheless sometimes speaks as though solitary ascetics were the ideal type of the monk:[129]

> The purity of the monk is a holy temple of God. For some [live] in sheep-skins and goat-skins, but others in mountains and caves, and cavities within rocks, needy, afflicted, mortified, undergoing the strain of asceticism, and putting on the power of incorruptibility like the holy angels.[130]

His sermons thus present an austere picture of the ideal monk and his lifestyle.

The dominant theme of Symeon's preaching for monks is, however, the need to be aware of the attacks of the demons and how to resist them. He describes the various ways in which the demons attack by day and by night, and the consequent need for the monk to be constantly vigilant.[131] His emphasis varies: in sermon 9, discussed below, he speaks about the frightening and strange appearances of the different demons; in sermon 21, in contrast, he focuses on their association with various potential sins. This latter sermon contains his most developed discussion of the effects of the suggestions of different demons (avarice, pride, jealousy, fornication, and *acedia*) on monks, showing an awareness of the potential dangers

[126] *Οὕτως ἐστὶν ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ μοναχοῦ· καὶ τὸ μετὰ τούτων τῶν ἀρετῶν ἐπινοεῖν ἑαυτοῦ τῷ σώματι θλίψεις ἑτέρας μαρτυρικῶς κατὰ δύναμιν· καθάπερ γὰρ ἡ θάλαττα τοὺς ἅπαντας ποταμοὺς δεχομένη, οὐδαμῶς ἐμπίπλαται, ἕως ἂν οὐρανὸς καὶ γῆ παλαιωθῇ, οὕτως ὀφείλει τῷ μοναχῷ εἶναι ἀκόρεστον τὸ διὰ παντὸς ἀγῶνας αὐτῷ ἐπιφέρειν ἕως τῆς ἐξόδου τοῦ σώματος*: sermon 25.3 (pp. 126–7).

[127] See e.g. sermons 26.8 (pp. 134–5), 29.1–5 (pp. 144–8).

[128] For examples in homiletic literature, see e.g. Evagrios Pontikos, 'To Eulogius' 29–31 (pp. 330–2); Evagrios Pontikos, 'On Thoughts' 35 (ed. pp. 272–6); Dorotheos of Gaza, 'Instructions', II, 32 (p. 194), XIV, 153 (p. 430); Isaiah of Scetis, *Ascetic Discourses* 4 (trans. pp. 57–8).

[129] If we accept Symeon's authorship, he must have preached to his monks. As argued above, even if the sermons were not written by the saint, they are still likely to have been produced at his monastery. Irrespective of this, various passages in the sermons, such as those quoted below discussing the dangers of rivalry among monastic brethren and of leaving the monastery, suggest a coenobitic audience.

[130] *Καθαρότης γὰρ μοναχοῦ, ναὸς θεοῦ ἅγιος ὑπάρχει· οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐν μηλωταῖς καὶ αἰγίοις δέρμασιν· ἕτεροι δὲ ἐν ὄρεσι καὶ σπηλαίοις, καὶ τοῖς τῶν πετρῶν φωλεοῖς, ὑστερούμενοι, θλιβόμενοι, κακοχούμενοι, τὸν τῆς ἀσκήσεως τόνον ἐκπληροῦντες, καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τὴς ἀφθαρσίας κατὰ τοὺς ἁγίους ἀγγέλους ἐνδυόμενοι*: sermon 25.1 (p. 125).

[131] See e.g. sermons 4 (pp. 47–50) and 9.1–5 (pp. 37–41).

of communal monastic living, reminiscent of that found in the works of Evagrios and Isaiah.[132] In this sermon he adopts a monastic interpretation of avarice, unlike elsewhere in the collection, stating that the demon of avarice tempts the monk by making him think about the sufferings of the poor and needy, and thereby making him seek the company of the rich. He is opposed to economic activities, claiming that demons also throw the monk 'into unprofitable complications and earthly concerns, into needless questionings which are misleading and unsuitable for monks, diverting him through supposedly good arguments for acquisition, either towards buildings, or vine-working and care for herds'.[133] A similar hostility to economic activities runs through much of the corpus associated with Symeon, including the hagiographic Lives of Symeon himself and of his mother Martha.[134]

Sermon 21 is in many respects his most pastoral sermon, as he appears keen to discourage conflict and dissension among his brethren. He notes the danger of rivalry between monks, stating that demons cause the monk to despair because he cannot equal his neighbour in virtue, to envy 'the one who is capable in the struggle concerning piety towards God', and to rejoice when one of his companions is destroyed by sin.[135] He is particularly concerned to warn monks not to abandon their monasteries to found new ones: he reports that the demons suggest to a monk who has made progress in virtue that he should leave and found his own monastery, so that he can lead his own brethren and nurture the poor; then, having persuaded him to do this, when the practical concerns of founding his monastery have caused his behaviour to decline from virtue, they make him regret leaving his monastery; he then tries to return to his old monastery but they incite the brotherhood against him so that they refuse to readmit him; finally, he is completely alienated and returns to the world. This sequence of events, described in unusual detail, conveys a particularly severe warning to the audience that there may well be no return for anyone who abandons his monastery from pride and ambition; it is perhaps unsurprising that this should be regarded by the hegumen as an unforgivable sin. As we will see in the next chapter, Symeon appears to have struggled at times to retain the loyalty of his monastic disciples; his exhortations to the monks to resist the subversive suggestions of the demons may therefore have been of more than theoretical importance.[136]

He emphasizes two key features of demonic attacks, irrespective of what sin they are trying to incite. First, he stresses the demons' craftiness, repeatedly warning that monks should never become complacent, since demons often

[132] See e.g. Isaiah of Scetis, *Discourses* 5 (trans. pp. 69–76); Evagrios Pontikos, 'to Eulogius' 5 (p. 313), 17 (pp. 321–2), 24 (pp. 326–7), 26 (pp. 328–9), 31 (p. 332).

[133] *Συμπλοκὰς ἀνοφελεῖς καὶ φροντίδας γῆϊνας, εἰς περιεργείας τὲ ἀπατηλὰς καὶ μὴ πρεπούσας μοναχοῖς, ὡς ἐν χρηστολογίαις δῆθεν περιποιήσεως ἀπάγοντες, ἢ πρὸς οἰκοδομὰς, ἢ ἀμπελουργία[ι]ς καὶ κτηνῶν εὐνοίας*: sermon 21.6 (pp. 107–8).

[134] See below pp. 143–4, 179.

[135] *τὸν ἰσχύοντα ἐν πάλῃ περὶ τὴν εἰς θεὸν εὐσέβειαν*: sermon 21.5 (p. 107).

[136] See below pp. 136–43.

cunningly allow them to make unimpeded progress for a while before beginning or resuming their attacks. Thus he describes how demons allow novices to begin their monastic careers with such success that they are on the point of being inscribed in the Book of Life—whereupon the demons strike:

> And when [a monk] begins, they allow him for a while to possess subordination, love, gentleness of temper, [the ascetic] struggle; and to be sympathetic, free, blameless, strong, obedient to commands, quiet in voice and well disposed, not swearing by anything, not loosely using distasteful words; and they allow him to store up all these achievements in heaven. And later, seeing God aroused to help him, to inscribe his name in the book of life, then suddenly, poured upon him like a flood of water, they work to destroy his efforts through desires.[137]

Secondly, however, he emphasizes in several passages that it is possible for a steadfast monk to defeat demonic attacks, as the demons are fundamentally weak.[138] Thus at the beginning of sermon 9 he states that while demons terrify the soul of the monk, they do not have the power to implement their threats. Just as someone might plan in the agora to rob an inexperienced pauper, but would run away if someone brave and confident appeared, so too demonic apparitions may frighten someone inexperienced into abandoning piety, but are easily chased away by a wise monk using the sign of the cross.[139] His message is therefore simultaneously uncompromising (there is little excuse for a monk to succumb to the demons) and encouraging (anyone can resist if he is strong and follows my guidance).

Symeon does not present his teaching about demons as purely theoretical; rather, he claims that he himself had received visions about demons, and indeed had fought and defeated them. This is a particularly prominent theme in sermon 9, on demonic attacks. After the opening of the sermon, which, as just discussed, states that demons can only overcome weak monks, the preacher asserts that he has personal knowledge of this topic: 'For I, having put it appropriately to the test, have achieved theory/vision.'[140] His claim to have personal experience is highlighted by the emphatic pronoun *ἐγώ*. Throughout the sermon, even when he is talking about demonic attacks in the abstract, he repeatedly uses first-person verbs

[137] *Καὶ ὅτ' ἂν ἄρχηται, ἐῶσιν αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ τέως ἔχειν ὑποταγὴν, ἀγάπην, πραϋπάθειαν, ἀγῶνα· εἶτα τε συμπαθῆ, ἐλεύθερον, ἄμεμπτον, καρτερικὸν, ὑπήκοον περὶ τὰ κελευόμενα, τῇ φωνῇ ἥσυχον καὶ εὐδιάθετον, καὶ μὴ ὀμνύοντα ἔν τινι, μὴδὲ ἀτακτοῦντα λόγοις ἀηδέσι· καὶ πάντα τὰ κατορθώματα συγχωροῦσιν αὐτῷ θησαυρίζειν ἐν οὐρανοῖς· καὶ λοιπὸν βλέποντες τὸν θεὸν διεγειρόμενον πρὸς βοήθειαν αὐτοῦ, τοῦ ἐγγράψαι τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐν βίβλῳ ζωῆς, τότε ἐξάπεινα ὡς βίαιον ὕδωρ περιχυθέντες αὐτῷ, κάμνουσι τὸν κόπον αὐτῷ ἀπωλέσαι διὰ τῶν ὁρέξεων*: sermon 21.7 (p. 108).

[138] The weakness of the demons is a major theme in the discourse attributed to Antony by Athanasios, *Life of Antony* 16–43 (pp. 176–252).

[139] Sermon 9.1 (p. 37). See also sermons 10.1 (pp. 45–6) and 25.1–2 (pp. 125–6).

[140] *Δεόντως γὰρ δοκιμάσας ἐγὼ κατέλαβον τὴν θεωρίαν*: sermon 9.1 (p. 37).

to stress his own familiarity with the topic: 'I know and believe that the demons are transformed into every form . . . . I know and believe when a monk is in self-control, a phalanx of demons besets him . . . .'[141] The verbs *οἶδα* and *πέπεισμαι* are positioned emphatically at the start of the sentence. In addition, in the course of the sermon he refers to numerous occasions in which he has seen different demons, claiming to recognize their various forms. He reports, for example:

> I know, moreover, and I have seen, demons transformed into divine light, in order through pride to darken the monk. And I have often seen species of demons transformed into winged beings. And I have seen the spirit of avarice, a plague and sordidly greedy of gain, gaping to swallow up the world. And behold, it was poor in its own nature (*hypostasis*), but destructive and full of burning coal. Again I saw the spirit of folly, wandering, small-brained, jingling, laughing proudly; and its clothing was like a mat, and its height was double, its length that of a four-cubit man; and I saw it plaguing self-controlled people, and stimulating them to fornication. I again saw demons urging [monks] to look at a young woman, and promising all the wealth of the world.[142]

He dramatizes his visionary experiences by claiming they surpass both speech and the ability of his audience to hear: 'and I observed their city, but a narration of the vision is not [possible]';[143] 'I saw these things, and I recognized everything. And more things than these the Lord did not hide from me. But I have written a part [of them], passing over many things in silence, on account of the weakness of those who do not have the capacity to hear.'[144] He claims not only that he saw the demons, but that he was able to resist them; he reports, for instance, that demons in the forms of dragons, serpents, and piglets wrestled with him, and tried to cut his loin-cloth, but that by making the sign of the cross and thinking on God's wisdom, he repelled them.[145]

[141] *Οἶδα γὰρ καὶ πέπεισμαι πρὸς ἕκαστον εἶδος μεταμορφοῦσθαι τοὺς δαίμονας . . . οἶδα καὶ πέπεισμαι ἐν ἐγκρατείαις ὄντος μοναχοῦ ἐπιστάσαν φάλαγγα δαιμόνων*: sermon 9.4–5 (pp. 40–1).

[142] *Οἶδα δὲ πάλιν ἐγὼ, καὶ ὠψόμην μεταμορφουμένους δαίμονας εἰς θεῖον φῶς, ὅπως διὰ τῆς ἐπάρσεως σκοτίσωσι τὸν μοναχόν. Καὶ εἰς πετεινὰ δὲ μεταμορφουμένας φύσεις δαιμόνων πολλάκις ἐθεώρησα· καὶ τὸ τῆς φιλαργυρίας εἶδον πνεῦμα λοιμὸν καὶ αἰσχροκερδῆ κεχηνότα τοῦ καταπιεῖν τὸν κόσμον· καὶ ἰδοὺ αὐτὸ ἦν πενόμενον κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν ὑπόστασιν, ὀλέθριόν τε καὶ ἀνθράκων ἐμπεπλησμένον· ὠψόμην πάλιν πνεῦμα μωρίας, πλάνον, μικροκέφαλον, καὶ κατακώδωνον, ὑψηλὰ γελῶντα· καὶ ἦν ἡ ἐσθὴς αὐτοῦ ψιαθώδης, καὶ τὸ ὕψος αὐτοῦ διπλοῦν, τὸ μῆκος αὐτοῦ τετραπηχέου ἀνδρός· καὶ αὐτὸ λοιμαῖνον τοὺς ἐγκρατεῖς, καὶ παροξύνον εἰς πορνείαν· εἶδον πάλιν δαίμονας προτρεπομένους εἰς θέαμα νύμφης, καὶ τὸν ἅπαντα πλοῦτον τοῦ κόσμοῦ ἐπαγγελλομένους*: sermon 9.5 (p. 41).

[143] *Καὶ πόλιν δὲ αὐτῶν κατεῖδον· ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστιν ἐξήγησις τῆς ὁράσεως*: sermon 9.6 (p. 41).

[144] *Ταῦτα εἶδον ἐγὼ, καὶ ἐπέγνων τὰ πάντα· καὶ πλείονα δὲ τούτων οὐκ ἔκρυψε κύριος ἀπ' ἐμοῦ· ἀλλὰ μέρος τι συνέταξα, τὰ πολλὰ σιωπήσας, διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τῶν ἀκούειν μὴ χωρούντων*: sermon 9.8 (p. 43).

[145] Sermon 9.6 (pp. 41–2).

At one level, these claims about his personal experiences with demons serve simply to substantiate his general arguments about demonic attacks; he can back up his theoretical observations through personal anecdotes. Their importance is greater than this, however, as they also place Symeon firmly in the tradition of the great monastic heroes of the past. Since the life of Antony the Great, at least, 'discernment of spirits' had been regarded as one of the key traits of the advanced ascetic; monastic leaders were expected to understand the different demons and how to combat them, both to help other monks and to gain personal control over the forces of evil.[146] David Brakke has argued persuasively that monastic identity was conceived in large part in terms of opposition to the demons.[147] Symeon's claims to have seen, and defeated, the demons thus confer spiritual authority upon him and his preaching. The *Life of Symeon the Younger* contains more descriptions of its hero's visions than perhaps any other late antique saint's Life.[148] At least two of these descriptions seem to derive from the sermon collection; it is thus possible that more of the *Life*'s accounts of visions could derive from earlier records of the saint's words, now lost.[149] But whether or not this is the case, the sermon collection that does survive suggests that visions were indeed an important component of Symeon's identity and in the construction of his spiritual authority. They displayed his special status as privileged recipient of divine illumination, reflecting a close relationship with God. What is more, demons were not the only subject about which he claimed to have seen revelations. When we turn to another key theme of the collection, eschatology, we will see that Symeon also professed to have received divine knowledge about the fate of the soul after death, the final judgement, and the end of the world.

Heaven and Hell

Throughout the collection, Symeon is preoccupied with the vivid reality of heaven and hell, as discussed by David Hester in a rare study of the stylite's sermons.[150] Symeon repeatedly reminds his audience that the present world and its pleasures are temporary and will, like the human body itself, be dissolved.[151] He is less interested than some early Christian preachers in the moment of death itself, but dwells in detail on the soul's fate after death.[152] Every soul will have to face

[146] On the role of demons in the *Life of Antony*, see Schneelmelcher 1980, pp. 281–92.
[147] Brakke 2006. [148] The ubiquity of visions in the *Life* is noted by Millar 2014, pp. 285, 292.
[149] See above pp. 64–72. [150] See Hester 1990.
[151] See e.g. sermons 10.1 (p. 45), 19.1–2, 5–6 (pp. 93–5, 96–8), 20.1 (p. 98), 26.1 (p. 137), 27.1 (p. 140).
[152] We find brief references to the moment of death in e.g. sermon 22, but nothing comparable to the detailed treatments of death discussed in Muehlberger 2019, ch. 2. On death in the early Greek ascetic tradition, see also Zecher 2015.

judgement (he seems to discuss both the judgement of the soul after a human's death, and the final judgement of all at the end of the world, without clarifying the relationship between the two).[153] He describes the joys of heaven, and the horrors of hell, in striking terms, again claiming personal knowledge, through revelation, of the afterlife.[154] His vision is entirely black and white: no degrees or levels of heaven or hell are envisioned. Interest in eschatology and the final judgement is ubiquitous in early Christian thought, but Symeon's sermons may fit into a context of rising speculation about the end of the world during the sixth century. The holy man does not make any great innovations in eschatological theology. What is striking about Symeon's sermons is simply how far they are pervaded by eschatology. His message is straightforward, vivid, and insistent: judgement is inescapable; if you are in a state of sin at death, there is no way to escape unspeakable horrors; but if you are virtuous, you will find unimaginable joys. Yet while he urges everyone to focus on the afterlife, his warnings are particularly directed at the rich; he repeatedly presents the last judgement as a time when worldly hierarchies will be overthrown.

Symeon claims to have received divinely inspired knowledge of the afterlife and of the fate of the soul after death. In sermon 30, he suggests that God has revealed the joys of paradise to him: 'I [*ἐγώ*] knowing the goodness of the Son, which is the same goodness as the Father's, have received freedom of speech to say that [in paradise] there are many cities, and there are many lands, there are many lights, and there are many glories, there is much joy.'[155] Later in the same sermon, he provides a vivid description of God's elect in heaven:

> Behold his saints, exalting in glory, wearing bright, eye-catching [? lit.: full of eyes] clothing, girdles and sandals of living stones, necklaces and things brighter than lightning, garments surpassing the day [in brightness], marked in the name and character of the son of God. Wherefore the seraphim worship, and the archangels tremble, the angels prostrate themselves, the light is greatly multiplied, the fire blazes high, the plants give way, the deathless horses leap and the

[153] See e.g. sermons 6.2–3 (pp. 17–18), 8.2, 7 (pp. 28–9, 32–3), 10.2–4 (pp. 46–9), 11.3–4 (pp. 51–3), 12.1–3 (pp. 53–7), 13.4–5 (pp. 59–63), 14.1 (pp. 63–4), 15.7 (pp. 72–3), 16.1–5 (pp. 73–9), 17.6 (pp. 86–7), 18.6–7 (pp. 91–2), 19.1–2, 5–6 (pp. 93–5, 96–8), 20.1–6 (pp. 98–102), 21.1–2 (pp. 103–4), 22.1–9 (pp. 111–18), 23.1–3 (pp. 118–21), 26.2, 6 (pp. 129, 132–3), 27.1, 3–4 (pp. 137–40), 28.1–4 (pp. 140–4), 29.3, 5 (pp. 145–8). On inconsistencies in his eschatology, see Hester 1990, p. 341.

[154] Brief references to the joys of heaven abound, but for longer expositions, see e.g. sermons 1 (pp. 33–5), 9.8 (pp. 43–4), 11.2 (pp. 50–1), 22.6–7 (pp. 115–16), 26.1, 5–6, 9–10 (pp. 127–9, 132–3, 135–7), 30.1–5 (pp. 48–52). Similarly, brief references to the tortures awaiting the sinner are ubiquitous, but for fuller expositions, see e.g. sermons 6.3 (pp. 17–18), 8.2 (pp. 28–9), 11.1 (pp. 49–50), 21.1–2 (pp. 103–4).

[155] *ἐγὼ δὲ εἰδὼς τὴν ἀγαθότητα τοῦ υἱοῦ, τῆς αὐτῆς ἀγαθότητος οὖσαν τοῦ πατρὸς, λαβὼν τὴν παρρησίαν εἰπεῖν, ὅτι πολλαὶ πόλεις εἰσὶ, καὶ χῶραι πολλαί εἰσὶ, φῶτα πολλά εἰσὶ, καὶ δόξαι πολλαί εἰσὶ, χαρὰ πολλή ἐστί*: sermon 30.2 (p. 150).

> chariots spring gracefully, the clouds bear those mounted on them on high. And while all this will be thus, others of the saints will grow wings like eagles, and some will fly like doves; and everything will flourish in joy and happiness.[156]

The speaker's use of the present tense for most of the passage conveys an almost ecstatic impression, as if he could see the vision before his eyes while speaking, and was trying to recreate it for his audience. It is important that Symeon does provide vivid evocations of the joys of heaven, and not only of the horrors of hell: he hopes to persuade his audience to reform not only through fear, but also through the promise that their sacrifices and sufferings will be worthwhile in the end.

Nonetheless, in other passages his emphasis is much more threatening. In sermon 22, he reports an extremely ominous revelation, as if it had been reported to him by another visionary: 'Behold, I speak mysteries to you: for I know a man in this generation who has been informed that few now are to be found who give over their souls into the hands of the angels'; rather, 'it is the demons who receive them'.[157] The subsequent few lines are perhaps corrupt, and certainly difficult to translate, but one relatively clear passage implies that this anonymous man was himself capable of saving souls from the demons: 'and when he had rebuked them [the demons] by the power of the Holy Spirit, holding out his hand to the soul constrained in compulsion, immediately these [the demons], terrified, let it go and fled. And the soul returned to its position in the body.'[158]

The speaker then proceeds to say that this man contemplated and bewailed the demonic treatment of souls who had sinned, whereupon, 'having shouted, like Moses, in his mind towards God, he asked to understand something about this saying; and it was revealed to him through the Holy Spirit that from ten thousand scarcely one soul would be found in the present times advancing in the hands of the holy angels'.[159] This is then followed by a narrative of the fate of the soul after death, which describes the different demons examining the soul to see if they can

[156] *ὁρᾶτε τοὺς ἁγίους αὐτοῦ καυχωμένους ἐν δόξῃ, λαμπρὸν καὶ ὁλόφθαλμον ἔχοντας ἔνδυμα, ζώνας καὶ ὑποδήματα διὰ λίθων ζώντων, μανιάκια καὶ τὰ αὐγάζοντα ὑπὲρ ἀστραπὴν, στολὰς ὑπερνικώσας τὴν ἡμέραν, ἐν ὀνόματι καὶ χαρακτῆρι κατεστιγμένας τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ· διὸ καὶ τὰ σεραφεὶμ προσκυνοῦσιν, καὶ ἀρχάγγελοι τρέμουσιν, οἱ ἄγγελοι προσπίπτουσιν, τὸ φῶς ὑπερπληθύνεται, τὸ πῦρ ὑπερεκπυροῦται, τὰ φυτὰ ὑποκλίνουσιν, οἱ ἀθάνατοι ἵπποι σκιρτῶσι, καὶ τὰ ὀχήματα ἐν εὐπρεπείᾳ ἄλλονται, αἱ νεφέλαι μετεώρως φέρουσι τοὺς ἐπιβαίνοντας· τούτων δὲ οὕτως ἐσομένων, ἄλλοι τῶν ἁγίων πτεροφυήσουσιν ὡς ἀετοὶ, καί τινες ὡς περιστεραὶ πετασθήσονται· τὰ δὲ πάντα εὐφροσύνην καὶ χαρὰν ἐξανθήσουσι*: sermon 30.6 (p. 153). See on this passage Hester 1990, pp. 340–1.

[157] *ἰδοὺ δὴ μυστήρια ὑμῖν λέγω· οἶδα ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπον ἐν τῇ γεννεᾷ ταύτῃ πεπληροφορημένον, ὅτι νῦν ὀλίγοι εὑρίσκονται οἱ εἰς χεῖρας ἀγγέλων παραδιδόντες τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν.... δαίμονες εἰσὶν οἱ παραλαμβάνοντες αὐτάς*: sermon 22.2 (p. 112). See Hester 1990, p. 337.

[158] *Καὶ ἐμβριμησταμένος αὐτοῖς ἐν δυνάμει τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου, ἐκτείναντός τε τὴν χεῖρα ἐπὶ τὴν βιαζομένην ἐν ἀνάγκῃ ψυχὴν, εὐθέως ἐκεῖνοι τρομάξαντες, ἔασαν αὐτὴν καὶ ἔφυγον· κἀκείνη ἐπιστρέψασα εἰς τὴν αὐτῆς τοῦ σώματος κατάστασιν ἐγένετο*: ibid.

[159] *Βοήσας ὡς Μωϋσῆς τῇ καρδίᾳ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν, ἐπηρώτα μαθεῖν τι περὶ τοῦ ῥήματος τούτου· καὶ ἐχρηματίσθη αὐτῷ διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου, ἀπὸ μυρίων μίαν μόλις εὑρίσκεσθαι ψυχὴν ἐν τοῖς ἐνεστῶσι χρόνοις, ἐν χερσὶ τῶν ἁγίων ἀγγέλων προερχομένην*: ibid.

find anything of their own sin in it, in a variant of a common account which appears in the works of many late antique authors (interestingly, several versions survive attributed to Symeon Stylites).[160]

Although this revelation, and anti-demonic power, are not attributed to the speaker, but to an anonymous acquaintance, it is highly likely that his audience would have understood this as a modest way of referring to Symeon himself. It seems to have been widely believed that Paul's claim in 2 Corinthians 12:1–5 to have known a man who had been taken up to heaven and seen revelations was a reference to Paul himself, and that some ascetics, imitating the apostle, reported their visions in the third person. Thus we read in the *Life of Alexander Akoimetos*, 'and this [vision] he confessed to us as if it had happened to another person. Just as the blessed Apostle Paul described his own vision as if it had belonged to someone else, so too did Alexander, the Apostle's disciple.'[161] It is therefore likely that Symeon is implicitly suggesting that he himself had 'shouted like Moses' and received the ominous revelation that barely one in ten thousand men of the present generation would be saved. He thus presents himself as a prophet (as signalled by the comparison to Moses) bringing God's warning to the world. His repeated, vivid descriptions of the Last Judgement and of the afterlife throughout the collection consolidate the impression that he spoke in the manner of an Old Testament prophet, as a mediator and messenger from God to humanity, bringing a message full of both threats and promises.

Symeon's vision of the afterlife is characterized by its stark polarization. There was no agreed eschatological theology in the early church; instead authors displayed a diverse range of understandings of the afterlife.[162] Some developed complicated images of the world to come, in which heaven had various sections or grades for people who had attained differing levels of virtue. This is even implied in some material associated with Symeon's own shrine. Thus in the *Life*

[160] On the development of these accounts of demons interrogating souls after death (which often use the image of aerial 'tollgates') from early Christianity through the Byzantine period, see e.g. Rivière 1924; Every 1976; Constas 2001, pp. 105–9; for a more general discussion of early Christian visions of the immediate afterlife, see Muehlberger 2019, ch. 4. None of these studies discuss any of the three versions of the story attributed to Symeon Stylites. One is, of course, the account in sermon 22. Another is found in Leontios of Neapolis's *Life of John the Almsgiver* 43 (pp. 395–6) which refers to a revelation spoken by 'the holy Symeon the Stylite' about the different demons which examine the soul after its death. Leontios does not specify which Symeon Stylites he means, which might suggest he was referring to Symeon the Elder. The third account, again in the form of a sermon, is translated in Latin in the *Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum* (vol. 7, 1677), but unfortunately its origin is not described. Again, however, it describes the angels and demons examining the soul (although it does not, unlike the first two, name the different demons associated with particular sins). It is attributed in the Latin translation to 'Simeonis Admirandi', which seems more likely to refer to Symeon the Younger than Elder, since the Younger was normally known as Symeon 'of the Wonderful Mountain', or sometimes as 'Symeon the Wonder-Worker [*thaumatourgos*]'. None of these three accounts attributed to Symeon appear to be directly related to one of the other two, however; all have more in common with various of the many other versions of the account.

[161] *Life of Alexander Akoimetos* (p. 680, trans. p. 266).

[162] Cf. Constas 2001, pp. 91–4 and passim; Shoemaker 2003, pp. 179–203.

of Martha, Martha is shown in a vision a fine mansion in heaven for herself, then an even more splendid mansion for Symeon, as well as eastern suburbs where the 'men and women pious in alms and god-fearing' lived.[163] The hierarchies of heaven are expressed still more clearly in other sources: the Bohairic *Life of Pachomios*, for example, contains an elaborate account of the different degrees of honour accorded to deceased monks of different degrees of virtue.[164] There are no such variations in the vision of the afterlife expressed in Symeon's sermons. Only two options are available: the full glory of heaven, involving lordship over the angels, fellowship with the saints and martyrs, and close proximity to God; or, in contrast, eternal fire and torment. It is important to note that Symeon's message is not entirely negative: while he does dwell on the sufferings of the wicked, he is equally committed to describing the glories of heaven. The divide between the two is, however, absolute:

> See with me the Lord saying in the gospels that He will separate the just on His right, from the sinners on His left, just as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.[165] And then He will say to the just, 'come, you blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' And to the sinners He will say, 'depart from me, accursed ones, into the outer darkness, which was prepared for the Devil and his angels'.[166] And there will be wailing [and gnashing] of teeth.[167]

Again, this polarized vision is not original; as this passage shows, Symeon could draw upon the Gospels to support his position. But whereas some Christian thinkers had elaborated upon this sparse picture of the afterlife—largely in order to accommodate different degrees of piety into heaven—Symeon retains the stark duality of Matthew, offering his audience only two, diametrically opposed options: heaven and hell.

These stark and often frightening evocations of the horrors of hell may have contributed to the authority and popularity of Symeon's sermons. James Cook, in an important recent study of John Chrysostom, has argued that fear played a significant role in Chrysostom's preaching. Chrysostom himself saw producing fear in his audience as part of the preacher's duties as teacher and doctor of souls. The audience too seem to have valued frightening and stern rhetoric in the context

[163] *τῶν ἐν ἐλεημοσύναις εὐσεβῶν καὶ φοβουμένων τὸν Θεὸν ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ γυναικῶν*: *Life of Martha* 17–18 (pp. 265–7, quote at p. 266).

[164] Bohairic *Life of Pachomios* 82 (pp. 87–91).

[165] Cf. Matthew 25:32–3.

[166] Cf. Matthew 25:41.

[167] *ὅρα μοι ἐν εὐαγγελίοις τὸν κύριον λέγοντα, ὅτι τοὺς δικαίους ἀφοριεῖ ἐκ δεξιῶν, τοὺς δὲ ἁμαρτωλοὺς ἐξ εὐωνύμων, ὥσπερ ἀφορίζει ὁ ποιμὴν τὰ πρόβατα ἀπὸ τῶν ἐρίφων· καὶ τότε ἐρεῖ τοῖς δικαίοις· δεῦτε οἱ εὐλογημένοι τοῦ πατρός μου, κληρονομήσατε τὴν ἡτοιμασμένην ὑμῖν βασιλείαν ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου· καὶ τοῖς ἁμαρτωλοῖς, πορεύεσθε οἱ κατηραμένοι εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον, τὸ ἡτοιμασμένον τῷ διαβόλῳ καὶ τοῖς ἀγγέλοις αὐτοῦ· ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων*: sermon 17.6 (p. 86).

of preaching and the liturgy; Chrysostom was popular in part because of his harsh language, not in despite of it.[168] Symeon himself values fear of judgement as an important part of the Christian mindset, citing the biblical claim that God will perform the will of those who fear him, and explaining that this refers to the spiritual fear of those who contemplate 'the fearful and frightening judgement which through unquenchable fire tests the whole earth'.[169] He also states that fear of judgement will help the Christian to resist yielding to pleasure.[170] His grim descriptions of the afterlife thus serve a didactic role, intending to provoke fear in the audience in order to stimulate them to greater piety.[171]

While many of Symeon's evocations of the afterlife refer to judgement at an unspecified future time, some go further, suggesting that the final *eschaton* was about to take place. Thus sermon 12 begins with an evocative description of Christ's Second Coming, appearing to imply that it was imminent:

> Approaching to the blessed glory of the manifestation [*ἐπιφανείας*] of the great God and our saviour Jesus Christ, sons of light, think on this wisely: and remove yourselves from earthly matters and strive to acquire the one who comes on the clouds of heaven with great power. For behold, the glory of the Lord will appear, and all flesh will see the salvation of our God, when the powers of the heavens shake, and the earth turns around, the angels shudder, and the just exult in the everlasting brightness.[172]

Although '*ἐπιφάνεια*' had various different senses in early Christian writings, one of these was Christ's Second Coming, and the description that follows makes it clear that Symeon is warning his audience to prepare for the *eschaton*. Elsewhere in the collection, sermon 28 suggests that the signs of the end of the world described in the Gospels (Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21) have already taken place. Symeon's description of the signs does not exactly match that found in the

[168] Cook 2019, passim.

[169] *τὸ φοβερὸν καὶ φρικτὸν δικαστήριον τὸ διὰ πυρὸς ἀσβέστου δοκιμάζον πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν*: sermon 2 (Van den Ven, 'Trois Sermons', p. 36); cf. Psalm 145:19 (Septuagint 144:19). Symeon quotes similar biblical passages in sermons 10.1, 10.3, 18.3.

[170] Sermon 3 (Van den Ven, 'Trois Sermons', p. 44); see also for similar sentiments sermon 9.2, 20.3, 25.2. For other Christian preachers' arguments that remembering judgement/death would help with good behaviour, see Muehlberger 2019 esp. pp. 8–9, 99–101. On descriptions of hell as a didactic tool, see also Henning 2014.

[171] Muehlberger 2019 (esp. ch. 2) has explored how many late antique preachers sought to inculcate greater piety in their audiences by encouraging them to imagine in detail the moment of their own death. This serves a similar purpose to Symeon's evocations of hell, although Symeon focuses less on the moment of death itself than on the pains of the afterlife.

[172] *τῇ μακαρίᾳ δόξῃ τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ προσελθόντες υἱοὶ φωτὸς, νοήσατε ταύτην συνετῶς· καὶ τῶν περιγείων πραγμάτων ἀπαλλαγέντες, τὸν παραγινόμενον ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ μετὰ δυνάμεως πολλῆς, ἀγωνίσασθε κτήσασθαι· ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἡ δόξα κυρίου ὀφθήσεται, καὶ ὄψεται πᾶσα σὰρξ τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν· ὅτ' ἂν αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν σαλεύονται, καὶ ἡ γῆ περιφέρεται, ἄγγελοι φρίττουσι, καὶ δίκαιοι ἀγάλλονται ἐπὶ τῇ ἀειδίῳ λαμπρότητι*: sermon 12.1 (p. 53).

Gospels, but is very similar in tone, and the subsequent reference, in the present tense, to the descent of the Lord makes its eschatological significance clear:

> Our eyes have seen the sun darkened, and earthquakes in cities and countryside, and burnings and fallings, and occurrence of signs, uprisings of peoples, and pourings out of blood, and gulfs threatening swallowings-up, encampings of locusts, uprisings of blood-eating wild beasts, seizings of men and children . . . . Our lamps are quenched, our talent is hidden, the heavenly master comes from above, rising powerfully, for Judgement.[173]

His words may well be intended to remind the reader of the series of disasters which had hit Antioch in the sixth century, including earthquakes and war. The preacher combines references to various eschatological parables ('our lamps are quenched' is an echo of the Parable of the Ten Virgins, 'our talent is hidden' of that of the Talents) to emphasize the unpreparedness of his audience and himself to face the coming *eschaton*.

These passages suggesting that the Second Coming was imminent seem to reflect wider eschatological trends during Justinian's reign, perhaps encouraged by the natural and military disasters of the period.[174] Thus for example Romanos the Melodist, in a hymn on the Ten Virgins, states explicitly that the end of the world is at hand, 'the final day is near . . . the bridegroom is coming; let us not remain outside, crying, "open!"', adducing as evidence the disasters which the current generation has witnessed:[175]

> How long, my soul, are you going to sleep this vain sleep, rest and snore? Wake up now, at what we see [happening]: grievous threats and constant earthquakes have disturbed the earth and those in it . . . the trumpets of the signs sound in the world, to predict to those expecting Christ that He will come . . . . We see these things now, [my] soul. They are not at the doors; they are the doors; they are ready and present. Nothing is missing, as Christ said, but everything will happen just as He foretold, both famines and plagues, and constant earthquakes, and race

[173] *Εἶδον οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἡμῶν ἥλιον σκοτισθέντα, καὶ σεισμοὺς κατὰ πόλεις καὶ χώρας, καὶ ἐμπρήσεις καὶ πτώσεις, καὶ σημεῖα γεγονότα, ἐθνῶν ἐπαναστάσεις, καὶ αἱμάτων ἐκχύσεις, καὶ χάσματα ἀπειλοῦντα καταπόσεις, ἀκρίδων στρατοπεδεύσεις, καὶ θηρίων αἱμοβόρων ἐπαναστάσεις, ἀνθρώπων καὶ παιδίων ἁρπάγματα . . . αἱ λαμπάδες ἡμῶν ἐσβέσθησαν, τὸ τάλαντον κέκρυπται, ὁ οὐράνιος δεσπότης ἄνωθεν δυνατῶς εἰς κρίσιν ἀνιστάμενος ἔρχεται*: sermon 28.3 (pp. 142–3).

[174] Magdalino 1993, esp. pp. 5–7; Meier 2003, esp. chs 1–2. Averil Cameron has recently expressed doubts about a general rise in eschatology in this period (and about links between natural disasters and apocalypticism), and called for detailed studies of the content and contexts of particular 'eschatological' texts: A. M. Cameron 2017.

[175] *ἡ ἐσχάτη ἐγγὺς / . . . ὁ νυμφίος ἔρχεται· / μὴ ἀπομείνωμεν ἔξω / βοῶντες· 'ἄνοιξον'*: Romanos the Melodist, *Kontakion* 48.1–2 (p. 410).

> has been roused against race; the things inside are frightening, and those outside are full of war; there is nowhere to be saved, for the danger is everywhere.[176]

Romanos, like Symeon in the passage quoted above, combines references to the parable of the Ten Virgins with descriptions of the current omens of the end time, in the form of disasters.[177] Aspects of Symeon's eschatology may thus reflect wider ideological developments, at least among some groups within the empire, prompted by some of the traumatic events of the mid-sixth century, including defeats to the Persians, severe outbreaks of plague, and earthquakes in both capital and provinces. The ideological effects of these disasters will be discussed in greater depth in subsequent chapters; they posed considerable challenges to the reputations of Symeon and other holy men. Symeon's sermons, with their lack of specificity and contextual references, provide no insights into the effects of the disasters on the saint's career. But they do show that the holy man provided repeated, stark warnings that his generation must prepare for judgement, warnings which must have resonated all the more powerfully in the context of rising concerns about the end of the world.

Yet although the preacher urges everyone to remember the inevitability of death and judgement, his words have one particular target: the rich and powerful. He frequently claims that the rich justify their immorality by ignoring, or denying, the soul's continued existence after death.[178] In one passage, he imagines a rich man claiming that no one has ever returned from Hades, thus implicitly denying Christ's resurrection.[179] His message, in contrast, is that all will be called to judgement, irrespective of their rank. He frequently stresses that neither wealth, nor family connections, will help a soul when it is being judged: God is impartial and will judge based on the soul's moral state alone.[180] He claims that all humans will be equal at the judgement, irrespective of their worldly rank; in fact, however, he tends to depict only the rich and powerful as facing punishment. He thus implies not merely a levelling of worldly hierarchies, but their complete reversal:

[176] *ὕπνωσας ὕπνον, ψυχή μου, κενόν / κεῖσαι καὶ ῥέγχεις ἕως πότε; / γρηγόρησον κἂν νῦν, πρὸς ὃ βλέπομεν. / ἀπειλαὶ ἐπαχθεῖς / καὶ σεισμοὶ συνεχεῖς / συνετάραξαν γῆν μετὰ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ / . . . ἠχοῦσι κατὰ κόσμον / τῶν σημείων αἱ σάλπιγγες / προμηνύουσαι Χριστὸν τοῖς προσδοκῶσιν, / ὅτι ἐλεύσεται . . . // ταῦτα καὶ νῦν θεωροῦμεν, ψυχή· / θύραι εἰσίν, οὐκ ἐπὶ θύραις· / ἐπέστη γὰρ καὶ πάρεστιν ἕτοιμα. / οὐκ ἐλλείπει οὐδέν / ὥσπερ εἶπε Χριστός, / ἀλλ' ὡς προεῖπε, πάντα γενήσεται· / καὶ λιμοὶ καὶ λοιμοὶ / καὶ σεισμοὶ συνεχεῖς, / καὶ ἔθνος ἐπὶ ἔθνος ἐγήγερται· τὰ ἔσω φοβερά, τὰ ἔξω δὲ / μάχης πεπλήρωνται. / οὐκ ἔστι ποῦ σωθῆναι· / πανταχοῦ γὰρ ὁ κίνδυνος*: ibid. 48.3–4 (pp. 411–12). Cf. Magdalino 1993, p. 6.

[177] On eschatology in Romanos, see also Meier 2003, pp. 77–84.

[178] The fate of the soul after death was a topic of much debate in the sixth century, a debate which was closely linked to conflict about the cult of saints (Dal Santo 2012). It does not seem impossible that Symeon's repeated references to this theme reflect this wider debate.

[179] Sermon 6.4 (p. 20).

[180] See e.g. sermon 11.1, 4 (pp. 49–50, 52–3), 14.1 (pp. 63–4), 18.6 (pp. 91–2), 19.6 (pp. 97–8).

> For there is no respecting-of-persons with the king of the ages, Christ, nor [is it possible] to give a golden ransom for a soul; neither the boldness of hangers-on, nor the help of relatives, nor friends, can deliver the soul; for these rather lament on their own account because the opportunity for repentance has passed. [For there are] no gifts blinding eyes towards forgiveness, nor canvassing by parents, nor support of relatives; nor will a ruler be above a poor person, nor a king above a pauper; but the rich man and the pauper will come to the same [tribunal]. Then proud kings, standing there naked with bowed heads, are sent to eternal death and bitter punishments; there the ruler, condemned, is flung to unquenchable fire and an underwater place, in a deathless worm, because he justified the impious because of bribes, and hid judgements from the poor, for doing injustice to their widows and orphans, and for living in luxury on delicious foods; there the just poor man is exalted by Christ in glory, in order to sit with the rulers of the people in eternal life, being glorified by angels.[181]

Although passages like this are clearly threatening towards the rich, they do have a more positive inverse: he reminds the less wealthy, who must have constituted the majority of his audience, that the injustices of this life are temporary, that their oppressors will be punished and the innocent poor exalted. These are not original arguments, but Symeon's emphasis on the punishment of the rich is notable, particularly given his position as a monastic, not ecclesiastical, author. His criticisms of the rich extend far beyond these passages describing posthumous judgement: wealth and its corrupting influence is a dominant theme of the collection. Symeon's role as prophet is not only founded on his claims to reveal God's mysteries to his audience; he also brings a powerful message of social criticism.

Rich and Poor

Symeon's strong concern to denounce worldly wealth distances him from most of the famous monastic authors of late antiquity. Monastic writers tended to refer to the secular rich only to warn monks to avoid them: thus Isaiah of Scetis instructs, 'Do not seek to make friends with those who are glorified in this world, lest the

[181] *Οὐ γάρ ἐστι παρὰ τῷ βασιλεῖ τῶν αἰώνων Χριστῷ προσωποληψία ἀνδρὸς, οὔτε χρυσίον ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ δοῦναι· οὐ παρασίτων θράσος, καὶ οἰκείων βοήθειαι, οὐ φίλοι δυνάμενοι ἐξελέσθαι ψυχήν· οὗτοι γὰρ μᾶλλον καθ' ἑαυτοὺς κόπτονται διὰ τὸν παρελθόντα τῆς μετανοίας καιρόν· οὐ δῶρα ἐκτυφλοῦντα ὀφθαλμοὺς πρὸς συγχώρησιν· οὐδὲ γονέων περιδρομὴ, ἢ συγγενῶν συμπάθεια· οὐκ ἔσται ἄρχων ὑπὲρ πένητα, οὐδὲ βασιλεὺς ὑπὲρ πτωχόν· ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πλούσιος καὶ πένης παραστήσονται· τότε βασιλεῖς ἀλαζόνες, γυμνοὶ καὶ τετραχηλισμένοι παριστάμενοι, ἐκπέμπονται εἰς αἰώνιον θάνατον καὶ τιμωρίας πικράς· ἐκεῖ ἄρχων κατακριθεὶς ἐκρίπτεται εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἄσβεστον καὶ εἰς τόπον ὑποβρύχιον, ἐν ἀθανάτῳ σκώληκι· διὰ τὸ δικαιοῦν τὸν ἀσεβῆ ἕνεκεν δώρων, καὶ ἀποκρύπτειν κρίματα πενήτων, εἰς τὸ ἀδικεῖν αὐτῶν χήρας καὶ ὀρφανοὺς, καὶ σπαταλᾷν ἐν ἡδύτητι βρωμάτων· ἐκεῖ πένης δίκαιος ἀψοῦται [? ὑψοῦται] ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ ἐν δόξῃ, τοῦ καθίσαι μετὰ ἀρχόντων λαοῦ ἐν ζωῇ ἀτελευτήτῳ ὑπὸ ἀγγέλων δοξαζόμενος*: sermon 14.1 (pp. 63–4).

glory of God becomes dimmed inside you', while Evagrios of Pontus warns that a monk afflicted by avarice, 'associates himself with wealthy women and indicates to them who should be treated well'.[182] They are preoccupied with particularly monastic concerns, such as the desire to gain money to perform almsgiving, anxieties about supporting oneself when too old or sick to perform manual labour, and the temptation to retain excessive wealth after joining a monastery.[183] They do not launch into lengthy, vitriolic attacks on the rich, even if they occasionally include brief criticisms of them. Isaiah of Scetis adopts a spiritual definition of poverty which implicitly excludes the non-monastic poor, implying a lack of interest in societal economic divides: 'the poor are not those who have renounced and given away this visible world alone, but those who have given up all evil and who hunger always for the remembrance of God.'[184] There were some important figures who broke this trend—including above all Shenoute of Atripe, discussed below—but it generally holds true of the most popular ascetic authors of the late antique east.

Attacks on the rich were, rather, a characteristic of ecclesiastical preaching. Wealth and its abuses constituted a major theme of the sermons of most famous early Christian preachers, including, in the east, John Chrysostom and the Cappadocian Fathers, and, in the west, Ambrose and Augustine.[185] The work of Peter Brown and others on early Christian rhetoric on wealth and poverty has revealed the complexity of its strategies and ambitions. Brown has argued that far from accurately reflecting social realities, early Christian rhetoric usually focused on social extremes, contrasting the extremely wealthy and the extremely poor while ignoring the majority of the population who fell in the middle.[186] He has also shown how a purely economic understanding of the poor was increasingly supplemented, and sometimes replaced, by one which conceptualized the pauper as someone who was owed justice by the powerful, in terms ultimately derived from the Hebrew Bible.[187] This discourse on wealth and poverty was inherently political and contributed to the growth of bishops' power: as Brown argued with reference to Ambrose of Milan, sermons on these themes served to 'open up for Ambrose and for similar Christian bishops a space for intervention in society';[188] they enabled bishops to appear as 'modern avatars of the prophets of ancient Israel'.[189]

[182] Isaiah of Scetis, *Discourses* 6 (trans. p. 78); Evagrios Pontikos, 'On Thoughts' 21 (p. 226, trans. p. 67). On Evagrios's portrayal of monastic avarice, see Brakke 2008.

[183] See e.g. Evagrios Pontikos, 'Eight Thoughts' (col. 1152), trans. p. 78: 'a monk with many possessions is like a heavily laden boat that easily sinks in a sea storm.' (NB: This text survives in various versions under various names: see Sinkewicz 2003, p. 67.) Not all early Christian monks renounced all their wealth; see e.g. Caner 2008, pp. 222–4; Laniado 2009.

[184] Isaiah of Scetis, *Discourses* 17 (trans. pp. 133–4).

[185] For Chrysostom on wealth, see e.g. Leyerle 1994; Hartney 2004, pp. 133ff.; Mayer 2006; Brändle 2008; Sitzler 2009. On the Cappadocian fathers, see esp. the works of Holman, including 2001 and 2006. For attitudes to wealth and poverty in the west, see esp. Brown 2012.

[186] Brown 2002, pp. 6–16, 45–9, 2012, pp. 76–8; cf. also López 2013, pp. 14–15.

[187] Brown 2002, pp. 68–73, 2012, pp. 79–81. Cf. also Holman 2009.

[188] Brown 2012, pp. 143–4.

[189] Ibid. p. 80.

Many of these complexities are reflected in Symeon's preaching. He provides elaborate descriptions of the luxurious lifestyles of the rich and denounces their oppressive treatment of the poor. For Symeon, unlike for many early Christian preachers, there seems to be no possibility of legitimate wealth or of living piously while retaining riches; his message is unusually harsh and uncompromising. Indeed, he goes so far as to associate the wealthy with one of the groups most despised by early Christian authors: pagans. He is less interested than some preachers in promoting almsgiving; his aggressive rhetoric thus seems to have a symbolic rather than strictly practical function. He creates a role for himself as defender of the poor and oppressed, a role which had the potential to be both powerful and deeply controversial.

Symeon gives detailed descriptions of the extravagant lives of the rich. He often imagines their thought processes, sometimes even portraying them temporarily renouncing their lifestyles before relapsing into sin. In sermon 8, for example, he imagines a rich man, having eaten too much, acknowledging the vanity of life, renouncing greediness, marriage, possessions, and injustice, and recognizing that earthly goods will lead to eternal torment. He then reports, however, that such repentance is not sincere, and that the rich man soon changes his mind:

> And the rich man, raising himself [to look] through some window, and viewing the pleasures of the world and their glory … piercing himself on the thorns of earthly things, begins to say, 'What is better than this glory? Or what is more than the love of parents? Or what is more enjoyable than the present good things? … Therefore let us be warmed by expensive wine and perfumes, with all the other foodstuffs; for our life is short and grievous, and the body will turn into ash, and the spirit will be dissolved like empty air; and so because of this we will choose, before the time of the tomb, to live in such houses, and before the time of ash, to dress our body in the diverse patterns of gold-threaded and silk garments; and before the last silence to be merry in speech and laughter and joys and complicated leaping dances. Of all things what is sweeter than a wife? With her life's sweet repose gleams and shines; for I will go into my house and sleep beside her; for living with her brings not bitterness, but happiness and joy.'[190]

[190] *Ὁ δὲ πλούσιος διά τινος θυρίδος ἑαυτὸν ἐωρίζων, καὶ θεωρῶν τὰς ἀπολαύσεις τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν … ταῖς ἀκάνθαις τῶν γηΐνων ἑαυτὸν περιπείρων, ἄρχεται λέγειν· τί βέλτιον τῆς δόξης ταύτης; τί πλέον τῆς τῶν γονέων στοργῆς; ἢ ἀπολαυστικώτερον τῶν παρόντων ἀγαθῶν; … ὅθεν οἴνου πολυτελοῦς καὶ μύρων σὺν τοῖς ἄλλοις ἅπασιν ἐδωδίμοις θαλφθῶμεν· ὅτι ὀλίγος καὶ λυπηρός ἐστιν ὁ βίος ἡμῶν, καὶ τὸ σῶμα τέφρα ἀποβήσεται, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα διαλυθήσεται ὡς χαυνὸς ἀήρ· διὰ τοῦτο οὖν αἱρησόμεθα πρὸ καιροῦ τῆς ταφῆς ἐνοικῆσαι εἰς τὰς τοιαύτας βάρεις· καὶ πρὸ καιροῦ τῆς τέφρας, ἐν ποικίλαις τῶν διαχρύσων καὶ σηρικῶν χιτώνων ἀμφιάζειν τὸ σῶμα· πρὸ δὲ τῆς ἐσχάτης σιγῆς, εὐφραίνεσθαι ῥήματι καὶ γέλωτι καὶ χαρμοναῖς καὶ πολυστρόφοις σκιρτήμασι· τί δὲ πάντων τῆς ὁμοζύγου ἡδύτερον; μεθ' ἧς ἡ γλυκερὰ τοῦ βίου ἀνάπαυσις ἐπιφώσκουσα καταυγάζει· εἰσελθὼν γὰρ εἰς τὸν οἶκον μου προσαναπαύσομαι αὐτῇ· οὐ γὰρ ἔχει πικρίαν ἡ συναναστροφὴ αὐτῆς, ἀλλ' εὐφροσύνην καὶ χαράν*: sermon 8.6 (pp. 31–2).

Here, as in other comparable passages, he presents a vivid picture of the rich man, referring to luxuries which engage all five senses (the sight of fine clothes; the taste of wine and food; the scent of perfume; the sounds of laughter and conversation; the touch of his wife), and imagining his innermost thoughts.[191] It is notable that in this passage Symeon does not depict the rich man as doing anything unusually scandalous, at least in terms of his sexual morality; he is not presented as consorting with prostitutes or committing adultery, but simply as desiring to sleep with his wife. This suggests that Symeon adopts a particularly hard-line approach to the wealthy; even the wish to continue living with his wife is presented as a sign of the rich man's swift relapse into sin.[192]

He is particularly concerned to denounce rich people's unjust treatment of the less powerful in society (indeed, he seems more interested in those experiencing various kinds of oppression than in the simply economic poor).[193] Thus in sermon 6 he imagines a rich man saying:

> I will acquire houses, I will buy fields, and I will rule over people, through slaves and slave girls; I will seize the land of this man into my farm [?], for it is very productive, and it will channel gold to me through rich harvests, and I will continue to put a heavy collar on my labourers, and I will give joy to my soul . . . for this is my part, and this is my lot. I will oppress the pauper, I will not spare widows, nor will I respect the grey hair of the old man; and my strength will be the law of righteousness, for weakness is exposed as useless.[194]

Despite the reference to the pauper, the rich man's words are focused more on injustice and oppression ('rule over people', 'seize the land', 'put a heavy collar', 'oppress'), and on the conflict between strength and weakness, than on the gap between wealth and poverty.

Indeed, for Symeon, wealth is essentially synonymous with injustice; there seems no possibility of legitimate wealth. In sermon 16 he claims that the rich gain their money through accepting bribes to make false judgements, through plundering orphans and widows, through treacherous murders, through lending money and demanding interest unjustly, and through forgeries.[195] Many

[191] For similar passages, see e.g. sermons 6.1–4 (pp. 17–20), 14.2–3 (pp. 64–6), 16.1–4 (pp. 73–7).

[192] Elsewhere, too, he preaches an entire sermon against those who elevate marriage to the status of a god, although he does, briefly, acknowledge its legitimacy: sermon 15 (pp. 66–73).

[193] See, on this theme in the works of ecclesiastical preachers, Brown 2002, pp. 68–73, 2012, pp. 79–81; Holman 2009.

[194] *Κτήσομαι βάρεις, ὠνήσομαι ἀγρούς, καὶ κρατήσω λαῶν, διὰ δούλων καὶ παιδίσκων· ἁρπάξω τοῦδε τὴν γῆν ἐν τῷ ἀγρῷ· ὅτι καλλίκαρπος αὕτη, ἐν εὐφορίαις χρυσὸν προσοδεύσει μοι, καὶ προσθήσω ἐπιθῆναι κλοιὸν βαρὺν ἐπὶ τοὺς γηπόνους μου· καὶ δώσω εὐφροσύνην τῇ ψυχῇ μου . . . ὅτι αὕτη μοι μερὶς, καὶ οὗτος μου κλῆρος· καταδυναστεύσω πένητα, οὐ φείσομαι χήρας, οὐδὲ πρεσβύτου ἐντραπήσομαι πολιάν· καὶ ἔσται μου ἡ ἰσχὺς νόμος τῆς δικαιοσύνης· τὸ γὰρ ἀσθενὲς ἄχρηστον ἐλέγχεται*: sermon 6.4 (p. 20).

[195] Sermon 16.1 (pp. 73–4). Compare also sermon 6.1–2 (pp. 17–8), 8.3 (pp. 29–30), 12.1–2 (pp. 53–5), 16.4 (p. 77).

ecclesiastical preachers, despite including vituperative attacks upon the impious rich, acknowledged the possibility that a rich man could be pious if he lived moderately and gave alms generously: thus even John Chrysostom could write, 'wealth will be good for its possessor if he does not spend it only on luxury, or on strong drink and harmful pleasures; if he enjoys luxury in moderation and distributes the rest to the stomachs of the poor, then wealth is a good thing'.[196]

Operating in a society in which the total abolition of wealth was neither possible nor desirable, churchmen tended to soften their messages to accommodate the pious Christian rich. Thus John Chrysostom also interpreted Jesus's words in the Gospels as proof that renunciation of riches was not necessary: 'he did the same thing for poverty; he did not make it mandatory. He did not simply say: "Sell all that you have", but "*If you want to be perfect, go, sell your belongings.*"'[197] Severos of Antioch, although often exhorting his audience to be generous to the poor, nonetheless at times adopts a strictly spiritual interpretation of scriptural references to the wickedness of wealth and the virtue of poverty, with the result that material wealth is not presented as a barrier to salvation: he says that it is not forbidden to become rich, but only to be enslaved by love of riches, and that it is not all the wealthy who are damned, but those who devote all their thoughts to worldly possessions.[198]

There is little sign of such accommodation in Symeon's sermons. He quotes the stricter parts of Jesus's message, 'it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 19:24) and 'it will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 19:23), with no suggestion that 'rich' in this context should be understood metaphorically.[199] Indeed, he comes close to suggesting that total renunciation and separation from the world provide the only opportunity for the rich to be saved:

> Thus it is necessary also for one approaching God for the heavenly inheritance to distribute well things gathered together evilly from the injustice of Mammon to the poor . . . and likewise with daily tears to separate himself like a stranger and a sojourner from the world, in the hope of coming to Christ . . . . On account of this the Lord himself said: 'Whoever does not leave his father or mother, or brothers, or sisters, or fields, or houses, and take up his cross and follow me, is not worthy of me.'[200]

[196] John Chrysostom, 'Against Those Who Go to the Circus Games' 5 (col. 1052, trans. p. 137).

[197] John Chrysostom, 'On Fasting' 3 (col. 318, trans. p. 77). Cf. Matthew 19:21.

[198] Homily 113 (p. 274). This spiritual/metaphorical interpretation of biblical references to wealth and poverty had, of course, a long history in early Christianity: see e.g. de Ste. Croix 1981, esp. 434–5.

[199] Sermon 6.5 (pp. 20–1); sermon 8.2 (p. 29).

[200] *Οὕτω δεῖ καὶ τὸν προσερχόμενον τῷ θεῷ πρὸς τὴν κληρονομίαν τὴν οὐράνιον τὰ κακῶς ἐκ τῆς ἀδικίας τοῦ μαμωνᾶ συναχθέντα, καλῶς διοικῆσαι τοῖς πένησιν . . . καὶ ὁμοίως δάκρυσι καθημερινοῖς ὡς ξένον καὶ παρεπίδημον διΐστασθαι τοῦ κόσμου, ἐν τῇ ἐλπίδι τοῦ καταλαβεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν . . . . διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο δὲ αὐτὸς ὁ κύριος ἔλεγε· ὁ μὴ καταλιπὼν πατέρα ἢ μητέρα, ἢ ἀδελφοὺς, ἢ ἀδελφὰς, ἢ ἀγροὺς, ἢ οἰκίας, καὶ λαβὼν τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκολουθῶν ὀπίσω μου, οὐκ ἔστι μου ἄξιος*: sermon 8.3 (p. 29).

Here Symeon combines two different gospel passages to emphasize the need for total dedication to Christ. He blends Matthew 19:29, 'everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life', and Matthew 10:38, 'whoever does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me', to demand the complete rejection of family ties. This is quite different from the process whereby ecclesiastical preachers tried to emphasize more moderate aspects of Christ's message. Symeon thus offers no route for a rich man to retain his wealth and status and still achieve salvation. His uncompromising language, and the stark division he draws between wealth and poverty, recall his equally black-and-white vision of the afterlife. The contrast he draws between monk and demon, between pauper and rich man, thus seems to symbolize the ultimate and eternal divide between heaven and hell.

When he explicitly discusses the social order he approaches, but falls short of, true radicalism. Like many other Christian preachers, he stresses the essential equality of mankind, reminding the rich that they are the brothers of the poor and lowly: 'How, taking up the sin of pride, do you say to your brother, "Don't go ahead of me, nor shall I serve you, since I am better than you?"'[201] All humans are in fact fellow slaves (of God).[202] The rich and the poor were formed from the same material, conceived in a similar womb, and were born and will die in the same way.[203] Symeon goes further than some preachers, however, in explicitly calling into question the basis of slavery:[204]

> Surely [God] did not create one Adam a slave, and another a freeman? And even if it had been thus, you as descended from the free should have observed justice, so as not to mistreat those begotten from the enslaved Adam, homebred [slaves] and labourers, sold and given and bought. But you have not acted thus . . . .[205]

Ultimately, however, he does not call for the overthrow of the social order, instead idealizing *eutaxia* and mutually beneficial and respectful relationships between

[201] *Πῶς τὸ τῆς ὑψηλοφροσύνης πτῶμα ἀναλαβὼν λέγεις τῷ ἀδελφῷ σου οὔτε προηγήσει μου, οὔτε διακονῶ σοι, μείζων σου ὤν*: sermon 13.2 (p. 58). For the view expressed by some—but not all—early Christian preachers that all men were equal and/or brothers, see Holman 2009, pp. 98–105; Brown 2012, pp. 79ff.

[202] Thus he repeatedly refers to the pauper as the 'fellow slave' and/or 'brother' of the rich man: see e.g. sermons 12.2 (p. 55); 12.3 (p. 55); 13.5 (p. 61); 14.2 (p. 64); 16.6 (p. 79).

[203] Sermon 12.2 (pp. 54–5).

[204] Even preachers who were particularly vehement in attacking the rich and defending the poor often glossed over slavery: Kelly 1995, pp. 99–100; Brown 2002, pp. 61–3. But for ascetic criticisms of slavery, see now Ramelli 2016.

[205] *μὴ ἕτερον ἄρα Ἀδὰμ ἔκτισε δοῦλον, καὶ ἕτερον ἐλεύθερον; καὶ εἰ οὕτως εἶχεν, ὡς ἐκ τοῦ ἐλευθέρου ὑπάρχοντά σε, φυλάττειν σε ἔδει τὰ δίκαια, τοῦ μὴ ἀδικεῖν τοὺς ἐκ τοῦ δουλωθέντος Ἀδὰμ γεγγενημένους οἰκογενεῖς καὶ γεηπόνους, πρατάς τε καὶ μεταδότας καὶ ὠνουμένους· ἀλλ᾽ οὐχ οὕτως διεπράξω*: sermon 16.6 (p. 79).

those of greater and lesser status.[206] He argues that God appointed the ruler like a choice vessel to judge justly and wisely, and the labourer as a vessel for service, 'so that we may each take care of what is just for each other';[207] the king takes care for his people, and his people serve him; the owner supports his slaves, and the slaves are well disposed to their lord:

> so that everyone, taking care of each other, will give what is due duly to each other, and will not be destroyed by each other as if under oppressive rule, for we are all mortals from Adam, one flesh, and one blood in Christ our Life . . . and as we have been taught, let this be thought among us; for there is no slave nor freeman; for we are all one in Jesus Christ our Lord.[208]

There is therefore some inconsistency in his position; this passage implies his support for the social order, at least in theory, yet, as discussed, elsewhere he appears to deny the possibility of just wealth, and of the salvation of the rich. Although he does not seem to be preaching revolution, he remains profoundly sceptical of the behaviour and status of the wealthy.

Indeed, he goes so far as to associate the rich with the one of the groups most abhorrent to late antique Christian authors: pagans. The association between avarice/wealth and idolatry/paganism is not unique to Symeon: we find passing comparisons between the two in the works of both ascetic authors such as Evagrios of Pontus and ecclesiastical authors like John Chrysostom.[209] Symeon, however, develops this point in much more depth, and suggests not only that the rich are like pagans, but that they truly are pagans. Sermon 8 begins with one of Symeon's characteristic attacks on wealth: he discusses the inevitable punishment of the avaricious at the Last Judgement, the need for renunciation, Christ's renewal of the world 'through poverty . . . so that those depriving themselves of earthly things will be glorified with Him', and the temporary repentance of the rich man followed by his swift relapse into sin.[210] He reports that when the rich man becomes hungry, he abandons his pious intentions, 'and perhaps even turns to idol-worship'.[211] He does not develop this theme at this point, instead returning to address the rich man and warning him that the goods promised to the saints in heaven far surpass the transitory pleasures of the world.

[206] For the concept of 'eutaxia', defined as 'good social order', see Caner 2009, p. 55.

[207] *ἵνα ἕκαστος τὰ ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων δίκαια μεριμνῶμεν*: sermon 16.6 (p. 80).

[208] *ὅπως πάντες τὰ ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων μεριμνῶντες, ἀλλήλοις τὰ ὅσια ὁσίως ἀποδώσωμεν, καὶ μὴ ὡς ἀπὸ καταδυναστείας ὑπ' ἀλλήλων ἀναλωθείημεν· οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἑνὸς Ἀδὰμ ὄντες θνητοί, μία σὰρξ, καὶ ἓν αἷμα ἐσμὲν ἐν Χριστῷ τῇ ζωῇ ἡμῶν . . . καὶ ὡς ἐδιδάχθημεν τοῦτο φρονείσθω ἐν ἡμῖν· ὅτι οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος· πάντες γὰρ ἡμεῖς εἷς ἐσμὲν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν*: ibid.

[209] Evagrios Pontikos, 'Eight Thoughts' (col. 1153); John Chrysostom, *Seventh Homily on Colossians* 5 (cols 349–50).

[210] *Διὰ πενίας . . . ἵνα οἱ συστέλλοντες ἑαυτοὺς τῶν γηΐνων, σὺν αὐτῷ δοξασθῶσιν*: sermon 8.3 (p. 30).

[211] *Τάχα δὲ καὶ εἰς εἰδωλομανίαν μετεστράφη*: sermon 8.7 (p. 32).

He then, however, breaks into an attack on pagans. There is a loose connection to the preceding theme—Symeon notes that pagans are lured by demonic counsellors to enjoy the present life, in drunkenness, food, and marriage—before the passage develops into a polemic against the Greek gods and mythological figures. The grammar of the passage (at least in Mai's edition) temporarily breaks down, making his line of thought difficult to trace, but he attacks Herakles, 'Anteon', Skamander, Medea, Kronos, Semiramis, Zeus ('Dios, who is also Pezecus, whom they name Zeus'), Hermes, Hephaestos 'whom they call Pluto', Ares, and Aphrodite, for a variety of immoral behaviours, including wrestling, adultery, incest, magical practices, fornication, avarice, blasphemy, and lust. He proceeds to claim that all these 'gods' were in fact mortal men, who took the names of the stars on themselves, who were conceived by intercourse, oppressed their fellow men, and met bitter deaths. Interestingly, his account of the gods seems to derive from the chronicle of John Malalas: he reproduces, in rather garbled form, various details of the Antiochene chronicler's account, as well as his euhemerizing approach.[212] Yet while Malalas discusses the gods fairly neutrally, sometimes even praising their virtues (for example, he calls Hera 'good, just, and universally benevolent'), Symeon is entirely hostile, repeatedly referring to their corruption and deceitfulness.[213] He condemns the pagans who worship them as gods as 'stupid' (*ἀνόητοι*) and denounces their creation and worship of idols. It is at this point that he returns to the earlier theme of the 'Christian' rich man, explaining why his discussion of paganism is relevant:

> Do you see this, rich man, for it is towards you that my words look keenly, [my words] about the desires which you have in this life; for in this way a deadly prospect lies in wait for pagans; for they are greedy for the pleasures of the world, urging themselves on among them, to make the idols share their pleasure in them, and to take part in injustices and luxuries and fornications and defiled sacrifices and libations for the cult of the demons; setting up a table for the soul, that is the demon, and a mixture of wine for drunkenness, in revels and

[212] Especially Malalas 1.8–2.2 (pp. 9–18; trans. pp. 6–11). For example, compare Malalas 1.14–15 (pp. 14–16) with sermon 8.7 (p. 33), lines 15–18 (*Ἑρμῆς ὁ δολερὸς . . . ὡς πλοῦτον δωρούμενος*). Compare also ibid. lines 11–15 (*Διὸς . . . ἀβασίλευτον ὃν τότε*), to Malalas 1.9–10 (pp. 10–12), 1.13 (pp. 13–14). Further points of comparison between the two accounts abound, though it should be noted that some of the people mentioned by Symeon (e.g. Anteon, Skamander) do not appear in Malalas's account. There is nothing inherently implausible in the idea that Symeon might have known Malalas's work, at first or second hand: it was used by several contemporary historians, including his acquaintance Evagrios Scholastikos: see Jeffreys 1990a. On the relevant passage in Malalas, see Jeffreys 1996, esp. pp. 66–70. She shows that Malalas himself was using an earlier source, which was either the *Excerpta Barbari* or a very similar text. Symeon's version, however, seems to derive from that in Malalas, rather than his source, as it repeats various changes Malalas has made to the original: for example, like Malalas, Symeon describes Semiramis as Kronos's wife, not Picus's.

[213] Malalas, *Chronicle* 1.8 (p. 10, trans. p. 6). On Malalas's attitude towards the pagan past, see also Liebeschuetz 2004, pp. 151–2.

> drunkennesses and whorish songs and complex dances, where the whole sacrificial smoke of the idols resides .... For even if you are called a Christian, being corrupted in these regards you are distanced from God, 'because wisdom will not enter a soul that plots evil' [Wisdom 1:4].[214]

By the end of this passage, the distinction between pagan and rich man has entirely disappeared. Symeon describes the dissolute behaviour of the pagans, including sacrifices as well as drunkenness, fornication, worldliness, and oppression, but at the end implies that the rich man himself engages in all these activities: 'being corrupted *in these regards* you are distanced from God [emphasis mine].' He explicitly states that even if the wicked man calls himself a Christian, he is entirely removed from God; he is thus, in essence, also a pagan. The relationship between pagan and rich man thus does not lie solely in their comparable idolization of material objects; rather, the entire lifestyle of the rich man and all its associated luxuries are condemned as essentially pagan, and even tainted with the association of pagan sacrificial rituals. Indeed, although nowhere else in the sermon collection does he develop the connection between pagan and rich man at such length, he repeatedly refers to the rich man eating and drinking excessively 'as if on a day of sacrifice'.[215] Admittedly, this phrase is from the New Testament (James 5:5), so might be regarded as a commonplace. Yet Symeon always links it to a rich man drinking expensive wine or indulgent foods, an association not made explicit in James.[216] These references may therefore also echo the association Symeon draws in sermon 8 between the lifestyle of the rich and the lives of the pagans and their sacrificial practices.

Symeon emphasizes the oppressive and unjust behaviour of the pagans, in a manner very reminiscent of his attacks on the rich. The last section of sermon 8 contains a description of the effects of pagan belief:

> The gods of the pagans are demons, and products of the hands of men. For this reason those who believed in them brought one another to destruction; for they poured out blood in murders, because of theft and trickery, corruption and

[214] *ὁρᾷς ταῦτα ὦ πλούσιε, εἰς σὲ γὰρ ἀφορῶσιν ὀξέως οἱ λόγοι μου, περὶ ὧν ἔχεις ἐπιθυμιῶν τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου· οὕτως γὰρ ἀπόκειται τοῖς ἕλλησι νεκρὰ προσδοκία· πλεονεκτοῦσι γὰρ πρὸς τὰς ἡδονὰς τοῦ αἰῶνος, ἑαυτοὺς ἐν αὐταῖς ἐπείγοντες, πρὸς καὶ τὰ εἴδωλα συγχαίρειν αὐτοῖς, καὶ συναιρεῖσθαι ἐν ταῖς ἀδικίαις καὶ τρυφαῖς καὶ πορνείαις καὶ μιαραῖς πρὸς τελετὴν τῶν δαιμόνων θυσίαις καὶ σπονδαῖς· παρατιθοῦντες τράπεζαν τῇ ψυχῇ, τουτέστι τῷ δαίμονι, καὶ οἴνου κέρασμα πρὸς μέθην, ἐν κώμοις καὶ μέθαις καὶ ᾄσμασι πορνικοῖς καὶ πολυστρόφοις χορείαις, ἔνθα ἡ πᾶσα κνίσσα τῶν εἰδώλων αὐλίζεται .... εἰ γὰρ καὶ χριστιανὸς εἶ λεγόμενος, ἐν τούτοις ὡς διεφθαρμένος κεχώρισαι ἀπὸ θεοῦ, ὅτε εἰς κακότεχνον ψυχὴν οὐκ εἰσελεύσεται σοφία*: sermon 8.10 (p. 35).

[215] *ὡς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σφαγῆς*: sermons 11.3 (p. 52), 12.2 (pp. 54–5), 14.3 (p. 65), 16.1 (p. 74).

[216] The full text of James 5:5 reads: 'You have lived on the earth in luxury and in pleasure; you have fattened your hearts as if on a day of sacrifice' (I have made small changes to the *NRSV* translation). There is thus a connection to luxurious living, but no specific reference to over-eating and consumption of expensive wine as we find in Symeon.

> disbelief, disturbance and perjury, disordered uproars, forgetting of favours, pollution of souls, falsified lineages [?], and disorders in marriages, adulteries and licentiousnesses; for the worship of nameless idols with the wealth of the world is the cause, beginning, and end of every evil. For either they go mad from enjoyment, or they prophesy falsehoods, or they live unjustly, or they commit perjury readily; for believing in soulless idols, swearing wickedly, they do not expect to be harmed; but from both sides justice will pursue/punish them ....[217]

The beginning of this passage might seem to be talking about pagans in the past, as it uses verbs in the aorist and imperfect. The scope of the discussion then expands, however, with the general proposition that idol worship in wealth is the 'cause, beginning, and end of every evil'. From then on, Symeon switches to using the present tense, implying that he is referring to present-day idolaters. The accusations he makes against the pagans—murder, theft, corruption, perjury, adultery—are exactly the kinds of criticisms which he elsewhere makes of the rich. The link between the pagans and wealth is made explicit through the reference to 'the worship of nameless idols with the wealth of the world', which is presented as responsible for all evil. The boundaries between the rich and the pagans are again elided; both deny God in deeds as much as in words, living luxuriously and oppressing the weak. Symeon thus presents the rich not just as Christians who have lapsed through sin, but as outside the Christian community itself.

What motivated Symeon's attacks on the rich? Many clergymen who preached about wealth had a practical and pastoral aim: to encourage their audience to donate more generously to charity. It is far from clear, however, that this is the primary aim of Symeon's preaching. If we again compare his sermons to those of John Chrysostom, we see a striking difference. Chrysostom frequently exalts almsgiving as a key virtue, calling it 'the queen of the virtues, who quickly raises human beings to the heavenly vaults', and claiming that it can compensate for any other flaws: 'regardless of how many other sins you have, your almsgiving counterbalances all of them.'[218] He urges not only the extremely wealthy, but also those of moderate and lesser means to make charitable donations, which suggests that his preaching has practical motivations.[219]

[217] *Οἱ δὲ θεοὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν δαιμόνια, καὶ ἔργα χειρῶν ἀνθρώπων· διὰ τοῦτο καὶ οἱ πιστεύσαντες αὐτοῖς, ἕτερος τὸν ἕτερον εἰς ἀναίρεσιν ἤνεγκαν· ἐξέχεον γὰρ αἵματα ἐν φόνοις, διὰ κλοπὴν καὶ δόλον, φθοράν τε καὶ ἀπιστίαν, ταραχὴν καὶ ἐπιορκίαν, θορύβους ἀτάκτους, χαρίτων ἀμνηστίας, ψυχῶν μιασμὸν, γεννήσεως ἐναλλαγὰς, καὶ γάμων ἀταξίας, μοιχείας τὲ καὶ ἀσελγείας· ἡ γὰρ τῶν ἀνωνύμων εἰδώλων θρησκεία ἐν τῷ πλούτῳ τοῦ αἰῶνος παντὸς κακοῦ αἰτία, ἀρχή τε καὶ πέρας ἐστίν· ἢ γὰρ εὐφραινόμενοι μεμήνασιν, ἢ προφητεύουσι ψευδῆ, ἢ ζῶσιν ἀδίκως, ἢ ἐπιορκοῦσι ταχέως· ἀψύχοις γὰρ εἰδώλοις πεποιθότες, κακῶς ὀμόσαντες, ἀδικηθῆναι οὐ προσδέχονται· ἀμφοτέροθεν δὲ αὐτοῖς μετελεύσεται τὰ δίκαια*: sermon 8.11 (p. 36).

[218] John Chrysostom, 'On Almsgiving and the Ten Virgins' 1 (col. 293, trans. pp. 30–1).

[219] See e.g. John Chrysostom 'On Almsgiving' 3 (cols 265–6).

Symeon displays far less interest in the subject of almsgiving. He does not focus on the sufferings of the economic poor; he also rarely discusses the redemptive power of almsgiving at any length. One passage in sermon 16 does suggest that charity can help redeem the rich person. Yet even here, Symeon's focus is on stressing that almsgiving is *not* effective if it is undertaken for the sake of vainglory or from wealth which has been obtained unjustly (and, as we have seen, he tends to imply that all wealth is gained unjustly).[220] Again, he seems to suggest that the rich man needs to renounce all his possessions in order to be saved:

> And so what do you think about this, avaricious man, you who prefer to perform almsgiving from [the proceeds of] theft? So if you give alms, give your own possessions to the poor, to one a garment, to another food, and also rescue those who are being wronged, have mercy on widows, treat orphans well, tear up the unjust contract, from now on lending all your splendour of gold to God ….[221]

The sermon collection contains a few other references to the salvific power of almsgiving, but it is far from a major theme.[222] It thus does not appear that the primary motivation behind Symeon's attacks on the rich was the desire to stimulate charitable giving.

His strident rhetoric may, therefore, serve a symbolic rather than strictly practical function. As Peter Brown argued was the case for bishops, his attacks on the rich may have served to create for himself a moral and political role as defender of the poor, speaking with the voice of an Old Testament prophet.[223] By defining the poor not simply as the economically destitute, but as all those who are oppressed in any way (including farmers, slaves, debtors, and those treated unjustly in court) he expands the community for whom he claims to act as advocate; even members of his audience of moderate means could well have identified with the oppressed and wronged. Perhaps counter-intuitively, therefore, his message could be seen as targeted less at the rich themselves than at the 'poor', even though it is the former whom he addresses so frequently. Brown has argued that the rhetoric of bishops like Ambrose was populist and ran the risk of alienating some secular parts of the elite;[224] nonetheless, most bishops needed to keep the civic elite on their side, and showed them ways to accommodate their

[220] Sermon 16.4–5 (pp. 77–9). For this theme in the writings of other early Christian preachers, see Holman 2009, pp. 106ff.

[221] *Τί οὖν δοκεῖ σοι πρὸς ταῦτα φιλάργυρε, ὁ μᾶλλον ἐξ ἁρπαγῆς βουλόμενος ἐλεεῖν; εἰ οὖν ἐλεεῖς, τὰ ὑπάρχοντά σου διάδως* [? *διάδος*] *τοῖς πένησιν, ᾧ μὲν ἐσθῆτα, ᾧ δὲ τροφὴν, καὶ ἀδικουμένους ῥῦσαι, χήρας οἰκτείρησον, καὶ ὀρφανοὺς εὖ ποίησον, ἄδικον συγγραφὴν διάσπα, τὸν πάντα σου κόσμον τοῦ χρυσίου δανείζων ἀπενθεῦθεν* [? *ἀπεντεῦθεν*] *θεῷ*: sermon 16.5 (p. 78).

[222] See e.g. sermon 18.7 (pp. 92–3); 20.4 (p. 100).

[223] See above p. 99. Brown notes that the same was true for holy men but does not discuss this in detail.

[224] Brown 2012, esp. pp. 138–43.

wealth within the pious Christian community. Symeon, however, displays little interest in offering practical solutions to the wealthy as to how to live; his limited advice tends to involve total renunciation and the adoption of asceticism. Rather than trying to bring the Christian community together, he appears to be asserting sharp boundaries between the oppressive rich—who are also denigrated as pagans—and the oppressed poor, which could potentially include large swathes of society. As discussed in Chapter 1, the sixth century seems to have seen continued tensions between different social classes, and there is some, if limited, evidence from Antioch to support this picture.[225] This must have created opportunities for a holy man to play on this friction to win support and popularity.

The image of the holy man as defender of the poor against the depredations of the rich is not unusual. Many saints' Lives, particularly those from the fifth century, contain stories depicting their holy men reforming, or punishing, rich laypeople who acted oppressively.[226] In most of these cases, however, the stories are counterbalanced by others in which pious rich people who are devoted to the saint and his cult are treated by him with respect.[227] Symeon the Younger's Life stands out, since, as we will see, it contains no episodes which portray the local nobility positively.[228] Furthermore, since these other holy men are known only through their saints' Lives, we cannot be certain how far the anti-noble stories in these texts reflect the saints' lived experiences as well as hagiographic *topoi*. There is, however, one important example of a holy man who used similarly aggressive rhetoric against the rich and whose own sermons survive: Shenoute of Atripe.

Ariel López has argued persuasively that Shenoute used his claims to represent the poor to boost his own position as a local patron and to attack his rivals and enemies, in particular the nobleman Gesios, probably the subject of Shenoute's famous sermon 'Not because a fox barks'.[229] Shenoute attacked Gesios's (supposed) crypto-paganism, drawing a connection between rich, pagan, and oppressor similar to that found in Symeon's sermons. Shenoute was clearly a highly controversial figure in his time and afterwards, and his sermons are full of precise references to particular incidents and individuals. They are in this sense very different from Symeon's sermons, which are entirely shorn of specific details. Peter Brown has, however, pointed out that even a non-specific attack on a generic rich man could be interpreted, in the context of live preaching, as an attack

[225] See above pp. 33–8.

[226] Thus see Kallinikos, *Life of Hypatios* 21 (pp. 134–40), 44.8–19 (pp. 262–4); Syriac *Life of Symeon* (pp. 581–3, 585–8); *Life of Alexander Akoimetos* 34 (pp. 684–5), 39 (pp. 688–9); *Life of Marcellus Akoimetos* 32 (pp. 314–16).

[227] The *Life of Alexander Akoimetos* stands out as another Life which contains few positive stories about the rich, though it should be noted that it is much shorter and less detailed than the other Lives just cited.

[228] It does present a few Constantinopolitan notables in neutral or positive terms, which may suggest that it was the particular political circumstances in Antioch which engendered Symeon / his hagiographer's hostility towards the city's elites: see below, p. 163.

[229] López 2013, passim. See also Frankfurter 1998, pp. 77–82; Schroeder 2007, pp. 132–7.

on a known individual; Symeon's sermons could thus have proved highly contentious.[230]

Unfortunately, the sermon collection provides few clues as to whether his preaching reflected genuine tensions with the local noble community, as in the case of Shenoute. There are only the faintest hints in the sermons themselves of any reference to rich men opposing Symeon and his monks: in sermon 16, when describing the indecent behaviour of the rich, he accuses them of making fun of the pious, 'mocking the just on account of [their] chastity; for what is just and blessed has become for you a laughing stock and mockery'.[231] This appears to be a complaint about the rich mocking monks, but is so non-specific that it cannot be associated with any confidence with genuine historical conflict. In order to understand the context for Symeon's preaching better, it is necessary to turn to other sources, and in particular to the *Life of Symeon the Younger*. Importantly, the *Life*, as we will see in the next chapter, appears very hostile towards Antioch's wealthy classes, and indeed draws a very similar connection between them and paganism to that found in the sermon collection. By examining this theme in terms of the challenges that Symeon faced in his career, and in the broader context of Antiochene society in the sixth century, we may come to a better understanding of the holy man's role in northern Syrian society. But the aggressive anti-wealth rhetoric of the sermons already warns us that he may have been far from a peaceful and generally accepted figure.

Conclusion

Symeon's sermons combine aspects of genres often regarded as distinct: the ascetic discourses of monks such as Evagrios Pontikos and Isaiah of Scetis, and the sermons of ecclesiastical preachers such as John Chrysostom and the Cappadocians. Symeon himself therefore appears as a liminal figure, bridging the gap between the internal world of the ascetic and his monastery and the extroverted and socially engaged domain of the Church and its preachers. The impression of Symeon gained from the sermons in many respects complements that found in his Life: both *Life* and sermons present Symeon as the recipient of divine visions; both depict him as a wise teacher of his monastic disciples; and both are intensely hostile to the wealthy and to pagans, often blurring the boundaries between the two. Nonetheless, the sermons reveal new sides to Symeon, which are suggestive of how the holy man constructed his own authority. Whereas Symeon's hagiographer presents his healing miracles as the basis of his

[230] Brown 2012, p. 142.

[231] *ἐμπαίζοντες δικαίους διὰ τὴν σωφροσύνην· καὶ τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὸ ὅσιον ἐγενήθη ὑμῖν εἰς γέλωτα καὶ εἰς ἐμπαιγμόν*: sermon 16.3 (p. 76).

popularity, the sermons reveal the power of Symeon's own rhetoric, which is only hinted at in the *Life*.[232] He presents himself, implicitly, as a prophetic mediator between heaven and earth, bringing an uncompromising message. His authority is thus founded in large part on the claim to have a privileged relationship with God; we may suspect that this rendered him vulnerable to criticism if this special relationship was not visibly maintained. This vulnerability is not confirmed in the sermon collection, however, which portrays Symeon as he wished to be seen. He eschews the accommodations made by some clerical preachers, focusing on the polarized opposition of demon and monk, rich and poor, and heaven and hell. His preaching was thus in many respects aggressive and confrontational, focusing not on what united the wider Christian community, but what divided it. He thus appears, like Shenoute of Atripe, as a figure who had the potential to create conflict as much as to assuage it.

This picture is confirmed by another short text attributed to Symeon's authorship: a letter to the emperor Justin II, preserved in the Acts of the Second Council of Nicaea.[233] In this letter, he encourages Justin to take harsh retribution on Samaritans who had apparently attacked a church near Porphyreon. He urges Justin:

> Not to have mercy on those who dared [to do] this, nor to spare them, nor to accept any kind of petition or defence concerning them, lest they should turn to another thing, as I had already seen in a vision, which I explained in the month of August to the most holy and God-honoured patriarch, telling him then to keep it to himself. For God did not hide their plans from us.[234]

This lends support to two aspects of the picture conveyed by Symeon's sermons: first, his claim to be a visionary and privileged recipient of messages from God; and second, his calls for the strict and sometimes violent imposition of Christian norms. In the letter his severe evocation of the punishments in store for the Samaritans recalls his language in the sermons: he writes of 'the sentence of the

[232] As discussed above, the *Life* does present Symeon as a preacher and provides the text of several sermons attributed to him. Only one of these, however, contains the eschatological focus which predominates in the sermon collection itself: *Life of Symeon* 171 (pp. 152–4).

[233] For a discussion of this letter, see Pummer 2002, pp. 317–25.

[234] *μὴ ποιῆσαι ἔλεος εἰς τοὺς τοῦτο τετολμηκότας, μήτε φείσασθαι αὐτῶν, μήτε τὴν οἱανοῦν παράκλησιν ἢ ἀπολογίαν δέξασθαι περὶ αὐτῶν, ἵνα μὴ καὶ εἰς ἄλλο τι τραπῶσι, καθὼς ἤδη θεωρίαν ἑωρακὼς ἤμην δηλώσας τῷ Αὐγούστῳ μηνὶ τῷ ἁγιωτάτῳ καὶ θεοτιμήτῳ πατριάρχῃ, σημάνας ἐν τῷ τέως παρ' ἑαυτῷ ἔχειν. Οὐ γὰρ ἔκρυψεν ἀφ' ἡμῶν ὁ Θεὸς τὰ διαβούλια αὐτῶν*. Symeon Stylites the Younger, 'Letter to Justin II', col. 3217. Pummer 2002 reproduces a translation of the letter from Mendham 1849, which translates *καθὼς ἤδη θεωρίαν ἑωρακώς* as 'I have discovered indications of this sort' rather than, as I have translated it above, 'as I had already seen in a vision'. The passage is admittedly difficult and 'vision' is not a typical translation of *θεωρία* (Lampe 1961, p. 648), but vision seems to me the best possible rendering here, especially given Symeon's subsequent reference to God revealing the Samaritans' plans to him.

unquenchable and lightless fire which is going to devour them' and states that the 'all holy and all powerful spirit of Jesus Christ . . . will anathematize them to the underground depths of the abyss, so that they may be destroyed in endless destruction'.[235] This invective is targeted not at wealthy Christians, but at anti-Christian saboteurs, but it nonetheless reveals the harshness of Symeon's rhetoric, lending support to the idea that he was a combative and potentially divisive figure. Unfortunately, the lack of specific references within the sermons to their delivery and reception makes it impossible to gauge from the collection itself what effect Symeon's preaching had on his audience. When, however, we turn to the next major text associated with Symeon's shrine, the *Life of Symeon the Younger*, we do find evidence that Symeon, like Shenoute, was a controversial figure who struggled to win the favour of his wider community.

[235] *τὴν καταδίκην τοῦ μέλλοντος αὐτοὺς κατεσθίειν ἀσβέστου καὶ ἀφεγγοῦς πυρός. καὶ καταθεματίσει αὐτοὺς εἰς τὰ καταχθόνια τῆς ἀβύσσου αὐτὸ τὸ πανάγιον καὶ παντοδύναμον Πνεῦμα Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ . . . τοῦ ἀπολέσθαι αὐτοὺς εἰς ἀπέραντον ἀπώλειαν*: Symeon Stylites the Younger, 'Letter to Justin II', col. 3217.

3

The Life of Symeon Stylites the Younger

The *Life of Symeon Stylites the Younger*, the saint's vast hagiographic biography, must lie at the heart of any study of Symeon's cult. It is in many respects a remarkable text, and much the best known of the works originating at the 'Wonderful Mountain', although still arguably understudied in comparison with other comparable saints' Lives. There have been a small number of excellent studies looking at the *Life* as a whole;[1] it has also been examined from various specific angles, including the intersection between the stylite's lifestyle and the liturgy, the presentation and significance of wounds in stylites' biographies, the mobility of stylites, and 'holy anorexia'.[2] Certain basic problems about the text's dating, compositional process, and authorship remain, however, unresolved.[3]

In addition, broader questions about the significance and interpretation of the *Life* deserve further attention. The text has a distinctive perspective, in geographical, political, and religious terms; it is not, however, as fiercely pro-Chalcedonian as has sometimes been claimed. Symeon's hagiographer seems preoccupied not with doctrine, but with various local challenges to the saint's authority from both within and outside his monastery. He describes serious opposition to the stylite among his own disciples, but in problematic terms which again raise concerns about the methodological challenges of handling hagiography. He also indicates that Symeon faced wide-ranging scepticism, and aroused hostility among some sections of secular Antiochene society. As argued in the previous chapter, the sermon collection attributed to Symeon suggests that the saint used aggressive and potentially divisive rhetoric but provides no means of assessing its social relevance. The *Life* places this rhetoric into context. It shows that Symeon and his supporters were forced to use various, sometimes conflicting, tactics to defend the saint from accusations of failure in the aftermath of the disasters that struck Antioch in his lifetime. The hagiographer combines apologetic strategies, such as the use of biblical typologies, to explain why Symeon could not prevent crises,

[1] Déroche 1996 (and see also Déroche 2004); Millar 2014. Van den Ven's introduction to his edition of the *Life* also remains essential. Some important discussion of the *Life* is included in Henry 2015, although this study is primarily focused on the archaeological evidence from the shrine.

[2] On the liturgy: Harvey 1998, esp. pp. 534–9. On wounds: Cremonesi 2011; Cremonesi 2008 discusses references to sacrificial meat, and to paganism more generally, in the *Life*. On mobility: Frank 2019. On 'holy anorexia': Caseau-Chevallier 2003; her attempts, essentially, to psychoanalyse Symeon do not seem to me convincing, as they rely on an overly literal interpretation of the *Life* and a downplaying of the specifically Christian significance of Symeon's *ascesis*.

[3] For a recent discussion of the text, see Boero and Kuper 2020, pp. 396–401.

Symeon Stylites the Younger and Late Antique Antioch: From Hagiography to History. Lucy Parker, Oxford University Press.
 DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780192865175.003.0004

with more aggressive polemical attacks on groups whom he makes scapegoats for the disasters, most notably the wealthy classes of Antioch. These disasters raised questions about the role of the holy man and about theodicy itself.

Before these themes can be analysed in detail, it is necessary to provide a brief description of the contents and structure of the *Life*. As Fergus Millar has noted, it is the longest saint's Life that has survived from before the Arab conquests, with over 250 chapters.[4] In its broad outlines, it shares the common structure of many saints' Lives: it begins with the marriage of Symeon's parents, his conception and birth, and continues to describe, first, his childhood, then, intermittently, key events in his life and in Antioch, before ending with his death. Between these descriptions of events comes a vast array of miracle stories, which are so numerous that it has been claimed that the text should be viewed as a miracle collection rather than as a true saint's Life.[5] This view is not entirely persuasive; given one basic distinction between a saint's Life and a miracle collection—that the former recounts the lifetime of the saint and the latter deals with the miracles of a (usually long-)dead saint—it seems preferable to continue to describe Symeon's hagiography as a saint's Life, but to note that the same tendencies that contributed to the proliferation of miracle collections in the late sixth and early seventh centuries also affected contemporary saints' Lives, so that the boundary between the two genres is permeable.[6] Nonetheless, the volume of miracle stories in the text is exceptional and worthy of note.

Although the basic framework of the *Life* is chronological, beginning with Symeon's conception and ending with his death, it is not fully chronologically structured. While most of the datable events in the *Life* are in broadly the correct temporal order, some are out of place, and the miracle stories are sometimes grouped in thematic 'clusters' rather than by any possible chronology.[7] The text has various other oddities: one sequence of miracles appears twice in the text in slightly different forms,[8] while the monk Angoulas, a major opponent of Symeon's, first appears in chapter 123, but is presented again as if for the first time in chapter 168.[9] Another distinctive feature is the shift in narrative voice from chapter 71 onwards: while all the previous chapters have been recounted entirely in the third person, from 71 the narrator frequently, though far from

[4] Millar 2014, p. 286.

[5] Déroche 1996, p. 70; Dal Santo 2012, pp. 196–7; Efthymiadis 2014b, pp. 117–18.

[6] On the relationship between the two genres, see below pp. 209–16.

[7] See Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 124*–9*; Millar 2014, pp. 285–6; Déroche 1996, pp. 68–71 (Déroche 2004, p. 373, gives a somewhat more positive view of the *Life*'s chronology).

[8] The miracles in chapters 80–4 (pp. 68–9) and 86–9 (p. 70) are repeated, sometimes with more details (such as the names of the supplicants), in chapters 241–8 (pp. 216–19): see Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 130* n. 1; II, p. 86 n. 3, p. 241 n. 3; Chitty 1964, p. 181. Déroche has attempted to identify other examples of repetition of chapters or sequences of chapters but these are less certain (Déroche 1996, pp. 68–9).

[9] Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 130* n. 1; Chitty 1964, p. 180. On Angoulas and his role in the *Life*, see Déroche 1996, pp. 74–5, and below pp. 141–3, 159.

consistently, speaks of 'us' and 'we', apparently in reference to the monks of Symeon's monastery.[10] All these features must be borne in mind as we move on to consider the dating and authorship of the text.

The external evidence for the dating of the *Life of Symeon* is limited but important. Van den Ven in his introduction to his edition of the text describes its nine extant manuscripts, the earliest of which date from the late ninth century.[11] The *Life* is certainly earlier, however, as it had already been translated into Syriac in the early ninth century (827–8).[12] Other derivative forms of the *Life* survive—a Georgian translation, and several Greek metaphrastic and abbreviated versions of the text—but are of little help in establishing its original dating.[13] An Arabic version of the *Life* is also attested, but no longer appears to be extant.[14] Much more relevant are two eighth-century citations of the *Life*: it is quoted in the Acts of the Second Council of Nicaea (787) and in the third discourse of John of Damascus on images, probably dating from the first half of the eighth century.[15] This evidence thus situates the composition of the *Life* within, at the latest, 150 years of the saint's death. The only other piece of external evidence that might suggest a significantly earlier date for the *Life* is the statement by John of Damascus that it was written by Arkadios, archbishop of Cyprus. Arkadios was bishop of Cyprus in the first half of the seventh century and played an important role in the controversy over monoenergism; he also seems to have commissioned Leontios of Neapolis to write Lives of the Cypriot saints Spyridon and John the Almsgiver.[16]

The attribution of the text to Arkadios has, however, met with scepticism, in part because it is found in no other reference to, or manuscript of, the *Life* (no other witness names the text's author). Hippolyte Delehaye and, following him, Van den Ven, both found the attribution highly implausible on primarily

[10] See Delehaye 1923, pp. lxiii–lxiv; Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 102*–3*; Déroche 1996, pp. 71–2; Millar 2014, p. 283.

[11] Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 12*–30*.

[12] The only manuscript of this Syriac version of the *Life* dates from the tenth century, but it refers to the translation being made in the year 1139 of the Greeks, i.e. AD 827–8. Unfortunately, the Syriac translation of the *Life* is unpublished, and I have not been able to consult the manuscript (which is among the Sinai 'New Finds') in full. I have, however, seen images of the first few pages of the manuscript, which were very kindly shared with me by Vevian Zaki; from these, the translation appears faithful to the Greek *Life* (with a few small linguistic changes; for instance, where in his youth the Greek *Life* merely refers to the saint as 'Symeon', the Syriac translation consistently refers to him as Mar, i.e. Saint, Symeon). The manuscript is described (although mistakenly identified as a translation of Theodoret of Cyrrhus's work on Symeon the Elder), and its opening and closing lines are published, in Philothée du Sinaï 2008, pp. 320–2, 593. See the corrections and notes of Géhin 2009, pp. 75–6, 86.

[13] Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 34*–67*.

[14] Nasrallah 1972b.

[15] Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 32*–3*. See also Van den Ven 1955–7. The early eighth-century dating for John's third discourse on images has been challenged—most notably by Paul Speck—but remains dominant; see e.g. Louth 2002, p. 208, where a date in the 740s is suggested.

[16] On Arkadios's commissioning of Leontios, see Festugière and Rydén 1974, pp. 2–3.

chronological grounds: both believe the claim of the author of the *Life* that he was an eyewitness to Symeon's prediction of the death of Ephraim of Antioch in 545.[17] In their view, even if Arkadios had been a young monk in Symeon's monastery in 545, this would still mean that he had had an active monastic/ecclesiastical career of approximately ninety years, and must have died aged well over one hundred, which is highly improbable. This argument is not entirely conclusive: even if we accept that the author of chapter 71 had genuinely witnessed the events of 545, it is possible that the final 'author' of the *Life* as a whole was drawing on earlier written sources (a possibility that will be discussed shortly), and therefore could himself have joined the monastery later.[18] Arkadios could thus have acted as the final redactor of the *Life* even if he only joined the monastery in the late sixth century. Nonetheless, his authorship of the *Life* is unlikely, given the unreliability of its sole attester: John of Damascus also, for example, attributes John Moschos's *Spiritual Meadow* to the latter's friend Sophronios of Jerusalem.[19] The case that Arkadios wrote the *Life* certainly is not strong enough to allow a secure dating of the text to the sixth or seventh centuries; external evidence can therefore take us no further than a terminus ante quem of *c.*750.

The internal evidence of the *Life* has, therefore, formed the basis for most arguments about the text's dating. As mentioned above, several passages of the *Life* imply that their author was present at many of the events in Symeon's monastery from 545 onwards, which, if true, would mean that the text must have been written within a few decades of the saint's death. While these claims are not necessarily reliable (and become less relevant in any case if the final author's use of written sources is accepted as a possibility), it is very plausible that the text was written fairly soon after Symeon's death, by a monk of his monastery. The author is very interested in the monastery and its internal workings, and, in particular, in an outbreak of trouble which happened in the monastery shortly after Symeon's death. The hagiographer reports that Symeon, towards the end of his life, predicted that Angoulas (the supposedly insubordinate monk mentioned above) would, after the saint's death, become 'a traitor and a Judas to this place'; that 'his blasphemies' would be talked about 'almost everywhere'; and that he would be the 'cause of scandal' to many souls.[20] The hagiographer then notes, crucially, 'this in fact happened not long after [Symeon's] death'.[21] No details are provided of what form this 'scandal' took, but it must provide an important context for the writing of the *Life*; it is difficult to see why the author would be

[17] *Life of Symeon* 71 (pp. 60–2). See Delehaye 1923, pp. lxiii–lxiv; Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 101*–2*.

[18] Of course, not all claims by hagiographers to have witnessed their saint's miracles can be trusted, as Delehaye himself acknowledges; he does, however, regard Symeon's hagiographer's claim as plausible.

[19] John of Damascus, 'On Images' I.64 (p. 165), III.13 (p. 124).

[20] *προδότης καὶ Ἰούδας τοῦ τόπου τούτου*; *αἱ βλασφημίαι αὐτοῦ*; *σχεδὸν ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ*; *αἰτία σκανδάλου*: *Life of Symeon* 240 (p. 216).

[21] *ἥτις καὶ γέγονε μετ' οὐ πολὺ τῆς κοιμήσεως αὐτοῦ*: ibid.

so interested in Angoulas were he not a monk of the monastery who had some experience of the conflict after Symeon's death.

It is unlikely that we can determine the date of the text with any more precision than this. Vincent Déroche has argued that the *Life* can be dated to the reign of Phokas (602–10) because of a strange gap at the end of the text: it describes no events that can be dated between the accession of Tiberius in 578 and Symeon's death in 592. In particular, Déroche suggests that the author's failure to refer to Phokas's deposed and murdered predecessor Maurice, and his close associate Gregory, patriarch of Antioch (even though a contemporary author, Evagrios Scholastikos, presents Symeon as having friendly relations with both figures, and even though the *Life* does describe the saint's interactions with earlier patriarchs and emperors), arises from the virtual *damnatio memoriae* that Maurice was subjected to by his usurper.[22] This argument is tempting, but not conclusive, particularly given that the author is equally silent on the reign of Tiberius.[23] It could also be noted that both Gregory and Maurice were very unpopular in some circles during their lifetimes, so that even if the author did deliberately refuse to mention them, this does not necessarily presuppose a date after 602.[24] Again, we can say little more than that the author was almost certainly a monk of the saint's monastery, writing within a few decades of his death.

Should we, however, be speaking of the text's 'author' at all? While Delehaye and Van den Ven conceived of the text as having a single author who used only limited written sources (perhaps including his own notes taken contemporaneously with the events described), Déroche has challenged this view, arguing, on the basis of the text's repetitions and other inconsistencies discussed above, that the final author acted as a compiler, who drew on various pre-existing sources, but failed to synthesize them convincingly.[25] Boero and Kuper suggest that the *Life* 'constitutes a heterogeneous bricolage of different views, shifting emphases, and incongruities'.[26] As argued above, the author does seem to have used at least one written source, namely, a record of Symeon's sermons.[27] Beyond this, it is difficult to identify any particular sources used, but it is certainly not unlikely that, for example, he could have incorporated earlier records of miraculous cures into the later *Life*. There is no reason, however, to think that this compositional process

[22] Déroche 1996, pp. 73–4. [23] Millar 2014, p. 283.

[24] On Maurice, see e.g. Whitby 1988, pp. 18–19, 24–5; on Gregory, see Lee 2007, pp. 99–106. Whitby 1998, p. 331, suggests that Symeon's hagiographer does not mention Gregory because 'the Life was composed under the restored Patriarch Anastasius, when there may have been no incentive to invent a close friendship'—but provides no evidence for this dating of the *Life*.

[25] Delehaye 1923, pp. lxii–iii; Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 103*–4*; Déroche 1996, pp. 66–73. Millar is sceptical of the latter argument: Millar 2014, pp. 283–4.

[26] Boero and Kuper 2020, p. 390. They also suggest that the *Life* 'does not have a unified narrative arc or a single literary theme'. While I agree that the *Life* displays narrative complexities, I do think that certain prominent themes recur across the *Life*, most notably the apologetic which I discuss below.

[27] See above Chapter 2, esp. pp. 70–2.

took place later than the late sixth or early seventh century; nor, as we have seen, does Déroche argue this.

A much more radical argument about the editing of the *Life* has, however, been made by Paul Speck, as part of his wide-ranging thesis about all pre-iconoclastic sources that refer to the veneration of icons. Speck's general argument, that the cult of images emerged at earliest in the late seventh century, and that any references to icons in earlier texts must be interpolations, has been strongly and persuasively challenged.[28] I will focus here only on his theories about the *Life of Symeon*.[29] He argues that the *Life* was systematically edited in various stages (and that the resultant *strata* of the text can be identified and analysed), and that insertions were made into the work at least as late as the ninth century.[30] His argument has been followed, somewhat more cautiously, by Leslie Brubaker, although rather than making claims about the composition of the entire text, she focuses on the two chapters, 119 and 158, which contain stories of miracle-working icons, suggesting that one and quite possibly both are late interpolations.[31] Yet neither the broad case, that the *Life of Symeon* was comprehensively edited in various stages, nor the specific case, that chapters 119 and 158 are late interpolations, is compelling. Speck adduces a host of examples to support his theory about the editing of the *Life* (in particular, he seeks to show that every reference to the saint's miracle-working dust is a later addition), which cannot all be analysed in detail here. In general, however, his arguments rest on some problematic assumptions and methodological approaches.

First, he frequently claims that he can discern what the original core of a particular story must have been, and thus how it has been edited, on very insecure grounds. Chapter 130 recounts that an Iberian priest visited Symeon, took some of his hairs as a *eulogia* (blessing), returned to Iberia, built a shrine near his village, made a cross, and shut the hairs inside it. The relic then cured many visitors, whereupon the Devil incited some local priests to denounce the first priest to their bishop as a magician. The bishop barred the priest from the liturgy and confiscated his possessions until, struck down by a sudden illness, he repented, went to the priest, was cured, and restored him to his former position. Speck claims that the beginning of this story was re-written by a later editor to play down tensions between Symeon's ascetic authority and the church's ecclesial power: he states that originally the priest must have taken Symeon's hairs to a church and tried to have them worshipped there, but was rejected and cast out, and it was only then that he built a separate shrine. The later editor also, in Speck's view, invented the detail about the priest putting the hairs inside a cross, to play down the novelty of

[28] See e.g. Dal Santo 2011c. [29] Expressed in Speck 1991, pp. 165–210.
[30] Ibid. pp. 165–6, 189–91, and passim.
[31] Brubaker 1998, pp. 1244–8. See also Brubaker and Haldon 2011, pp. 57–8.

revering hair.[32] This is clearly pure speculation. Speck also dismisses two stories as later additions to the text on the ground that they are too silly to be original; he repeatedly claims that awkward turns of phrase or slight inconsistencies are signs of later emendation, without considering the possibility that the original author might well not have been in full control of his material.[33] He has strong views about the forms that miracle stories ought to take: so, for example, if one account contains several miracles of different types, even if they happen to the same supplicants, he claims that this is a sign of later editing.[34] He does not justify these assertions and there is little reason to accept his view that the text has undergone reworkings in many stages.

Even his and Brubaker's arguments that the two chapters dealing with miracle-working icons are late interpolations are not entirely convincing. Chapter 118 recounts the story of a woman whom Symeon healed of demon possession and infertility; in gratitude, the woman set up a picture of the saint in her house, which then performed many miracles, including healing a haemorrhaging woman.[35] Speck claims that the original story must have been the initial healing of the woman, and that the icon and healing miracles were probably added in at least two subsequent stages.[36] Again, however, this argument rests on the unsupported view that miracle stories should only contain one miracle, whereas in fact multi-miracle stories are relatively common both in the *Life* and in other hagiographies.[37] Speck claims that the addition of the icon story to this chapter probably dates from, at earliest, the late eighth or early ninth century, on the grounds that it uses the term '*ὁμοίωσις*' in a sense that only develops at this late date: the haemorrhaging woman, when going to the icon to be healed, said to herself, 'If I only look upon his likeness/depiction [*ὁμοίωσιν*] I will be cured'.[38] In Lampe's *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, however, two citations are given for *ὁμοίωσις* in the sense of 'likeness, portrait': one from the early eighth century, but the other from a source dated by Schwartz to before Heraclius's Persian conquests, the anonymous *Narratio de rebus Persicis*.[39] Brubaker follows Speck's arguments and adds the point that although this passage is quoted in the 787 Nicene Acts, it was not by the earlier John of Damascus; her implication is that it did not exist in early eighth-century versions of the *Life*.[40] This is at best suggestive, but not conclusive, since we cannot be sure that John would have excerpted every single icon story known to him. Brubaker could, perhaps, have supported her argument by noting that the story which John of Damascus does quote from the *Life*, although called chapter 158 in

[32] Speck 1991, pp. 167–9. [33] Ibid. pp. 175, 181. [34] See e.g. ibid. p. 177.
[35] *Life of Symeon* 118 (pp. 96–8). [36] Speck 1991, pp. 188–9.
[37] For other examples in the *Life of Symeon*, see e.g. 43 (pp. 41–2), 101 (pp. 78–9), 137 (pp. 128–9), 195 (pp. 172–3), 213 (p. 182), 230 (pp. 203–4), 231 (pp. 204–8).
[38] *Life of Symeon* 118 (p. 96).
[39] Lampe 1961, p. 956; Schwartz in Pauly-Wissowa, Ia (1894), col. 2791.
[40] Brubaker 1998, pp. 1246–7.

the Acts of the Council of Nicaea and in the *Life*'s manuscripts, is referred to as miracle 132 by John.[41] This might seem to suggest that John possessed a shorter version of the *Life* than that which has been transmitted to us; yet it is also possible that the numbering of the *Life*'s chapters had not yet been standardized. Overall, while it cannot be ruled out that Chapter 118 was a later addition to the *Life*, this is not a certainty.

The case of chapter 158 is equally problematic. The story recounts that an artisan of Antioch, after being cured by the saint, set up an icon in thanks outside his workshop. Some 'unbelievers', however, grew angry at the icon and wanted to take it down; they asked a soldier to climb the ladder to the icon and destroy it, but when he got on the ladder he was thrown down by a miraculous power; this happened a further two times. Speck argues that this account is based upon a popular iconophile tale of the ninth century, reported in, among other texts, the *Chronicle* of Theophanes the Confessor and the *Life of Stephen the Younger*.[42] In this well-known story, Leo III arranged for the icon of Christ over the Chalke gate in Constantinople to be removed, but when his agent (or agents—the details vary in different accounts) went to remove it, some pious members of the city's population attacked and killed him. In the *Life of Stephen the Younger*, it is specified that the people, in this case women, pushed the emperor's guard off a ladder before killing him. Yet while there are clearly some parallels between the account in the *Life of Symeon* and those from the eighth century (in both cases the icon is in a public place, and its attackers are pushed off ladders) there are also significant differences: in the *Life of Symeon*, the focus is on the miraculous powers of the icon, and the refutation of unbelieving critics of the saint, whereas in the iconophile accounts, no miracle takes place; rather the focus is on the bravery of those who attacked the iconoclast guards and on the wickedness of Leo III. Even if the two stories are linked, the *Life of Symeon* chapter does not have to be secondary to the Chalke stories; indeed, Brubaker herself notes that the story in the *Life of Symeon* appears to predate the stories about the Chalke gate, since it was reported by John of Damascus in the early eighth century, whereas the Chalke stories emerged *c.*800.[43] There is thus no evidence that chapter 158 is a late interpolation into the *Life*.

In general, then, although the possibility cannot be ruled out that the *Life* had an unstable textual history, this has certainly not been proven. There is no evidence that it was systematically edited and interpolated as suggested by Speck. The most plausible hypothesis remains that the text was composed, much as it survives today, in the late sixth or early seventh centuries, by a monk from Symeon's monastery, drawing on at least one and quite possibly several written

[41] Van den Ven, 1962–70, I, p. 32*.
[42] Theophanes, AM 6218 (p. 405); Stephen the Deacon, *Life of Stephen the Younger* 10 (pp. 100–1).
[43] Brubaker 1998, pp. 1245–6.

sources (which may explain the presence of duplications in the work). With this in mind, it is time to analyse the contents of the *Life*, to investigate both the hagiographer's strategies and priorities in writing and, as far as possible, the position of the holy man himself. It has often been argued that doctrinal conflict was a key driving force behind the creation of Symeon the Younger's Life, and indeed his cult more generally. Yet it is far from clear that Symeon's hagiographer was preoccupied with doctrinal polemic. Rather, his primary motivation may have been very different: to provide an extended counterargument to criticisms made of the saint's powers in the context of the disasters that affected Antioch in the sixth century.

The Hagiographer's Worldview

In order to contextualize the hagiographer's presentation of Symeon's career, it is necessary to examine, briefly, his broader perspectives on the world, in terms of places, politics, and religion. The topography of the *Life* has recently been analysed by Fergus Millar.[44] He shows that the reach of Symeon's cult, at least according to his hagiographer, was concentrated in particular regions: he received visitors from the coast of Syria and the Orontes Valley, from coastal Asia Minor and Cappadocia, and from the Caucasus, and had some links with Constantinople. In contrast, very little is said about other Syrian cities or regions further south such as Palestine. By far the most important sources of support for the saint were the villages near his monastery, and Antioch and its environs. Not only does Symeon receive innumerable visitors from Antioch, but several of his miracles take place in the city, and various areas of it are described in some detail.[45] Indeed, Antioch plays such a prominent role in the *Life* that the stylite has been used as an example of the urbanization of 'popular' holy men, even though he never set foot in Antioch after leaving it as a young child.[46] As we will see, events in Antioch, and in particular the natural and military disasters suffered by the city, play a crucial role in the text;[47] in contrast, important events elsewhere in the empire are rarely mentioned.[48] The hagiographer thus has a strong local focus, despite claiming an international range for Symeon's cult.

[44] Millar 2014, pp. 284, 287–9.

[45] For his miracles in Antioch, see e.g. *Life of Symeon* 126 (pp. 112–13), 158 (pp. 139–41), 163 (p. 145), 224 (pp. 194–6).

[46] Thus Saradi 1995, p. 88; cf. also Saradi 2006, pp. 108–9. Although Symeon never returns to Antioch after ascending his column, he does see the city in many visions (and sometimes sees himself in the city): see e.g. *Life of Symeon* 57 (pp. 150–2), 104 (pp. 81–4), 127 (pp. 113–14), 160 (pp. 141–3), 162 (p. 144), 204 (pp. 177–8).

[47] See below pp. 123, 151–3, 158, 162–6.

[48] The main exceptions are an earthquake in 557 in Constantinople and neighbouring cities (*Life of Symeon* 106 [pp. 86–7]) and Justin II's descent into madness (ibid. 208–11 [pp. 179–81]).

The political position of the *Life* is complex, and in some respects perhaps surprising. The most important 'political' figures in the text are the patriarchs of Antioch and Constantinople, and the emperors. Symeon lived at a time of great controversy in both patriarchates. In Constantinople, patriarch Eutychios was deposed in 565, to be replaced by John Scholastikos, before being reinstated upon the latter's death in 577; in Antioch, Anastasios was deposed in 570, replaced by Gregory, and reinstated after his replacement's death in 592.[49] Rivalry between the two Constantinopolitan patriarchs Eutychios and John seems to have been bitter, and debates continued about the legitimacy of John's patriarchate even after his death and Eutychios's reinstatement.[50] The *Life of Symeon* presents John as an associate of the stylite's: Symeon predicted to John that he would be made patriarch when he sought the saint's advice about whether to accept ordination to the priesthood, and also told John that Justin would succeed Justinian, a prediction which John repeated to Justin, thereby cementing his friendship with the future emperor.[51]

Nonetheless, Symeon's hagiographer was not keen to take sides in the sometimes bitter quarrels surrounding the legitimacy of the two patriarchs. Even though Eutychios seems to have been a controversial figure, Symeon's hagiographer's sole reference to him, in the context of his deposition, is far from hostile: he states that 'some pretext was contrived, and Eutychios the most holy patriarch was deposed from the apostolic throne of the imperial city'.[52] This is hardly a strongly partisan line to take, given that it was only this devised pretext which enabled John Scholastikos to be appointed (although the hagiographer does emphasize that the choice of John was divinely inspired). Tension may have existed between John Scholastikos and Anastasios of Antioch, yet the *Life* is very favourable to Anastasios.[53] On the whole then, while the hagiographer presents a favourable picture of John Scholastikos, he steers clear of controversy. As discussed above, he is entirely silent on the divisive patriarchate of Gregory, although it is unclear whether this was because of Gregory's unpopularity or for unrelated reasons. Nevertheless, this silence certainly helps his apparent goal of avoiding taking any strong position on the conflicts in church politics of the later sixth century.

[49] On the conflict over the patriarchate in Constantinople, see Van den Ven 1965; A. M. Cameron 1988, pp. 233–41; on the changing patriarchs in Antioch, see Allen 1981, pp. 214–17. The relationship between Anastasios and Gregory seems to have been much less acrimonious than that of John and Eutychios (cf. ibid. 30).

[50] A. M. Cameron 1988, pp. 233–41.

[51] *Life of Symeon* 202–3 (pp. 176–7).

[52] *προφάσεώς τινος κινηθείσης, ἐξεβλήθη τοῦ ἀποστολικοῦ θρόνου τῆς βασιλευούσης πόλεως Εὐτύχιος ὁ ἁγιώτατος πατριάρχης*: ibid. 205 (p. 178). On Eutychios, see A. M. Cameron 1988.

[53] Theophanes claims that one reason for Anastasios's deposition was that he had objected to John's choice of bishop for Alexandria: Theophanes, AM 6062 (p. 243); see Allen 1981, pp. 214–17. For the attitude of Symeon's hagiographer, see *Life of Symeon* 204 (pp. 177–8).

There is, however, one striking exception to this general tendency towards neutrality: the *Life* presents a very negative portrait of Domninos, patriarch of Antioch from 545–59.[54] The hagiographer claims that Symeon had a vision foretelling that Domninos's predecessor Ephraim (who is greatly praised by the hagiographer) was going to die and that this would be damaging for Antioch; he also heard a voice saying 'Who knows where the one who is coming is from?'.[55] After Ephraim's death, the meaning of this vision became clear: Domninos, who was hegumen of an alms-house in Thrace, went to Justinian to discuss some business related to the alms-house; Justinian, upon seeing him, declared that he was the new patriarch of Antioch, 'without anything having been said about him by way of introduction'.[56] Domninos was then sent to Antioch as patriarch, where his first move was to attempt to expel the paupers who congregated by the city gate. The paupers sought Symeon's help against the bishop's repression, whereupon the stylite declared that God had heard their prayer and would cause Domninos to fall ill, 'so that he learns by trial to feel that compassion which he was not taught through nature'.[57] Soon the bishop fell so ill that he could no longer walk, and had to be carried everywhere; because of this he was widely scorned.

The account could hardly be more negative, particularly given that, unlike in many stories of punishment miracles, there appears to be no moment of repentance and cure for the bishop. The *Life*'s later report of Domninos's death is also inglorious.[58] Unfortunately, it is difficult to know why Symeon's hagiographer had such a hostile attitude towards Domninos. Domninos is in fact a rather enigmatic figure: in contrast to his predecessor Ephraim, and his successors Anastasios and Gregory, he has left little impression, positive or negative, on contemporary sources (of any Christological persuasion), even though he was a participant in important events such as the Second Council of Constantinople of 553.[59] The only other negative comment on him is found in the medieval chronicle of Michael the Syrian, in which he is criticized for greediness.[60] It is, therefore, very difficult to contextualize the hagiographer's antagonism towards Domninos: did he arouse widespread hostility in Antioch, despite the silence of other contemporary

[54] Ibid. 71–2 (pp. 60–3).

[55] *Ὁ ἐρχόμενος τίς οἶδε πόθεν ἐστίν*; ibid. 71 (p. 61).

[56] *μηδεμιᾶς ἐμφάσεως προλαληθείσης περὶ αὐτοῦ*: ibid. 72 (p. 62).

[57] *ἵνα γνῷ διὰ τῆς πείρας συμπάσχειν, ὅπερ διὰ τῆς φύσεως οὐκ ἐδιδάχθη*: ibid. 72 (pp. 62–3).

[58] Ibid. 204 (pp. 177–8).

[59] John of Ephesus, when listing the sixth-century patriarchs of Antioch, describes Domninos as ܠܛܝܢܝ (which can mean Latin, Greek, or soldier), but unfortunately the latter part of this sentence is lost, making his opinion of the bishop unclear: John of Ephesus, *Ecclesiastical History* 1.41 (p. 50). For Domninos's participation at the Second Council of Constantinople, see Eustratios Presbyter, *Life of Eutychios* (p. 29 line 811); Acts of the Second Council of Constantinople, *ACO* 1st series, 4.1 (1971), pp. 3, 7, 18, 24, 220–1.

[60] Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* (IV, pp. 322–3); see Van den Ven 1962–70, II, p. 79 n. 1.

sources, or was there a particular grievance between the patriarch and Symeon's monastery?[61] Nonetheless, the substance of the criticisms levelled in the *Life* may be significant: Domninos is attacked, above all, for oppressing the poor. Both Symeon's sermons and his hagiography display a consistent hostility to Antioch's wealthy classes: it seems that Symeon may have built his reputation, in part, by presenting himself as an opponent of the rich. If Domninos did, as Michael the Syrian claims, have a reputation for greediness, he could well have become a target for the saint. In any case, the hagiographer's treatment of Domninos is a striking exception to his generally positive portrayal of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

His treatment of the emperors of the period is also distinctive. As discussed above, the *Life* is entirely silent on the reigns of Tiberius and Maurice (apart from mentioning the former's accession): thus the only two emperors to play a role in the work are Justinian and Justin II. Justinian, despite having been in power for the majority of the period covered by the *Life*, only appears occasionally, and never as the central figure of a story. The hagiographer's attitude to him appears cool, at best: as we have just seen, he reports that Justinian chose Domninos as patriarch of Antioch without any justification for this mistaken decision. The two other references in the text to decisions by Justinian are less negative, but in neither case is the emperor himself given much credit. In one, the Spirit of God prompts Justinian to appoint John Scholastikos to replace Eutychios; the point of the story is clearly that John had God's support—Justinian's role is of little importance.[62] In the other, Symeon predicts that the 'formidable commander/official' Amantios would come to Antioch to persecute the city's pagans after he has a vision of Amantios in 'the palace of the emperor' in Constantinople.[63] Yet the emperor in question (almost certainly Justinian) is not named, and Amantios is described as a man 'to whom authority, great and powerful beyond those who had been in power before him, had been given *through the Spirit* over the eastern empire [emphasis mine]'.[64] The initiative to send Amantios to Antioch is thus attributed to God, in response to Symeon's prayer; no credit is given to Justinian. Thus, while the hagiographer does not explicitly criticize Justinian, his attitude towards him appears distant. He certainly makes no reference to the support apparently given by the emperor to Antioch to help it recover from earthquakes and Persian sack.[65]

[61] Belgin-Henry has suggested that Domninos may have withdrawn the previous patriarch Ephraim's support for the building of the monastery on the 'Wonderful Mountain' (see Henry 2015, pp. 88–9; Belgin-Henry 2019, p. 65).

[62] *Life of Symeon* 205 (p. 178).

[63] *Φοβερὸς ἄρχων*: ibid. 160 (p. 143); *ἐν τῷ παλατίῳ τοῦ βασιλέως*: ibid. 160 (p. 142).

[64] *ᾧ ἐδίδοτο ἐξουσία διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ἀρχῆς τῆς Ἑῴας μεγάλη καὶ δυνατὴ ὑπὲρ τοὺς ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ ἄρξαντας*: ibid.

[65] On Justinian's support for the reconstruction of Antioch, see Prokopios, *On Buildings* 2.10.2–25 (pp. 76–80); Foss 1997, p. 193; Brasse 2010.

It is tempting to suggest that this coolness towards Justinian may reflect a wider disengagement by many inhabitants of the eastern provinces from the imperial centre, in response to the government's failure to defend the east from Persian invasions.[66] This argument is somewhat weakened, however, by the fact that Symeon's hagiographer pays rather more attention to Justinian's successor, Justin II. The stories about Justin are clustered together in the later part of the *Life*, and move swiftly from Justin's accession, as predicted by Symeon, to his madness and death.[67] Initially the relationship between saint and emperor is very positive: Symeon is said to have been Justin's intimate confidant, and to have healed his sick daughter. After this, however, everything went wrong: Justin fell ill and Sophia, his wife, was persuaded to entrust his health to a Jewish doctor, the 'sorcerer' Timothy.[68] Symeon protested against this repeatedly but was ignored, until Justin was struck down with madness by a divine power which proclaimed to him, 'Be now a [warning] tale for all men, because you didn't put your hopes in divine assistance, but delivered yourself to the deception of demons'.[69] Whereas other authors attributed Justin's well-documented madness to a range of causes, including the loss of Dara to the Persians, and the emperor's profligate lifestyle and persecution of the miaphysites, Symeon's hagiographer blamed his refusal to obey the saint's commands, thereby refuting any potential accusation that Symeon's powers of protection had failed the emperor.[70]

Overall, then, the hagiographer displays a rather unusual attitude to ecclesiastical and imperial politics. In terms of the Church, he avoids taking sides in the well-publicized patriarchal conflicts of the sixth century, but presents a vehement and unparalleled attack on the apparently oppressive Domninos. He seems rather less favourable to emperors, in general, than to patriarchs, but was perhaps forced to explain why Symeon's relationship with Justin II did not prevent the latter from going mad. His focus throughout is on Antioch and its surroundings, and his attitude to all events is dependent upon the interests of Symeon's reputation and cult. With this in mind, it is now time to turn to a potentially contentious question: the Christological attitudes of Symeon's hagiographer and of the saint himself.

[66] As discussed by Meier 2003, e.g. pp. 313ff.

[67] *Life of Symeon* 203 (p. 177), 206–11 (pp. 178–81).

[68] Hostile depictions of Jews are common in late antique and Byzantine hagiography, as in much Byzantine literature: for an introductory discussion of Byzantine anti-Jewish polemic, with further bibliography, see Déroche 2011.

[69] *Ἕσο τέως ὧδε διήγημα πάντων ἀνθρώπων, ἀνθ' ὧν οὐκ ἤλπισας ἐπὶ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ βοήθειαν, ἀλλ' ἐξέδωκας ἑαυτὸν τῇ τῶν δαιμόνων πλάνῃ*: *Life of Symeon* 210 (p. 180).

[70] Evagrios Scholastikos 5.11 (p. 207); John of Ephesus, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.2 (pp. 121–3).

Christology

Sixth-century Antioch and its environs were religiously diverse, and often fraught with tensions. Northern Syria was one of the regions of the empire which saw the least consensus over the Christological conflicts that divided Christianity in the period. As we have seen, it is difficult to ascertain what doctrinal position the majority of Antiochenes espoused, and miaphysitism may have been declining in the region by the later sixth century.[71] Nonetheless, it is highly likely that the sphere of Symeon the Younger's influence included territories inhabited by both Chalcedonians and miaphysites, and tensions between the two might be expected to form an important backdrop to the saint's career. In view of this, one of the most surprising features of Symeon's Life is its treatment, or rather total neglect, of Christology: the author makes no direct reference to Chalcedonianism or miaphysitism. The only possible allusions to the controversies are implicit: Symeon is urged to accept ordination because of the need for orthodox priests to administer communion in a time of heresies, while elsewhere the hagiographer claims that the stylite had caused many heretics to return to God.[72] We only presume that Symeon himself was Chalcedonian because of his apparently friendly relations with known Chalcedonians such as Evagrios Scholastikos, the Antiochene patriarchs Ephraim and Gregory, and the emperor Justin II.[73]

Nonetheless, many historians who have considered the problem of the *Life*'s Christology have presumed that it was vigorously Chalcedonian, focusing on another striking feature of the work: the absence of any explicit reference to Symeon's forebear, Symeon the Elder.[74] Thus, it has been argued, the Younger's Life and cult were a vehemently Chalcedonian counter to the nearby shrine of the Elder at Qalaat Semaan, which was now controlled by miaphysites.[75] So, for example, Susan Ashbrook Harvey has claimed that the *Life* has an 'aggressively Chalcedonian stance', Robin Lane Fox that it was 'essentially the "orthodox" retort to the Monophysites' annexation of Simeon the Elder', and Michael Whitby that Symeon was 'a saint who was promoted . . . by the Chalcedonian Christians of Antioch in a deliberate attempt to rival the continuing popularity of Symeon the

[71] See above pp. 48–53.

[72] *Life of Symeon* 132 (p. 132); Déroche 1996, p. 76. *Life of Symeon* 125 (p. 112).

[73] Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 168*.

[74] But on possible echoes of the Lives of Symeon the Elder in the text, see Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 132*–4*, 171*–7*. Van den Ven argues, persuasively, that the number of direct borrowings that can be traced between the texts is very limited, pointing out that some similarities between the works might result from their shared reliance on a pre-existing repertoire of hagiographic stories, rather than on direct interdependence.

[75] Peeters 1950, pp. 134–6; Van den Ven, 1962–70, I, p. 97* and, more cautiously, pp. 171*–7*; Van den Ven 1965, p. 351; Lafontaine-Dosogne 1967, p. 195; Whitby 1987, p. 315; Hester 1990, p. 329; Lane Fox 1997, p. 209; Harvey 1998, p. 535 n. 47; Sodini 2010, pp. 319–21. Cf. also (although expressed rather less strongly), A. M. Cameron 2014, p. 8; Binggeli 2009, p. 437.

Elder's monastery at Qalaat Semaan'.[76] Such arguments imply that Christological conflicts were the main driving force behind the *Life*—and indeed, in the last case, behind the saint's career itself—and that one of its chief ambitions was to focalise Chalcedonian sentiment against their doctrinal rivals.

This is not, however, a convincing reading of the *Life*. Arguments that the text was vehemently Chalcedonian fail to explain why the author never mentions miaphysites explicitly and does not attack them or their doctrines. It was hardly rare for sixth- and seventh-century hagiography to be openly doctrinally polemical. On the Chalcedonian side, Cyril of Scythopolis and John Moschos stand out as authors who were particularly condemnatory of miaphysites; the latter refers, for example, to 'the godless heresies which used to flourish and flourish still, and most of all . . . the heresy of Severus Acephalus and of the pernicious sect of the rest of them'.[77] On the anti-Chalcedonian side, John Rufus and John of Ephesus included stinging attacks on Chalcedonians and their doctrines in their hagiographies: John of Ephesus, for example, not only attacks individual Chalcedonians as oppressive persecutors but also shows his heroes presenting Chalcedonian doctrine in polemical terms: 'instead of the Holy Trinity . . . these men [Chalcedonians] were secretly introducing a quaternity.'[78]

The *Life of Symeon* contains nothing comparable to these criticisms. The only Christological heretic who appears in the text is an Arian Goth, and Symeon's teachings to him, as Fergus Millar has noted, seem intended to combat not miaphysitism but, in complete contrast, Nestorianism: Symeon taught that 'the enemies of the son of God are the Jews and those who, like them, deny and do not confess that Christ is the son of God', as well as those who deny that Mary is the Theotokos.[79] This could, perhaps, be viewed as Chalcedonian apologetic, intended to emphasize that Chalcedonians had nothing in common with Nestorians, but it certainly cannot be seen as an aggressively pro-Chalcedonian attack on miaphysitism. On that topic, the hagiographer is entirely silent: he seems purposefully to avoid the kind of anti-miaphysite polemic espoused by some of his contemporaries.

It is more plausible that the *Life*'s failure to mention miaphysites is less an attempt to oppose them than to conciliate them. This is argued, with differing emphases, by Déroche and Cremonesi: Cremonesi contends that the hagiographer consciously downplayed divisions between Christians in an effort to unite them

[76] Harvey 1998, p. 535 n. 47; Lane Fox 1997, p. 209; Whitby 1987, p. 315. Whitby does, however, note in the introduction to his translation of Evagrios's *Ecclesiastical History* that Symeon 'is not presented by his biographer as having to pay attention to a Monophysite "problem" at his station close to Antioch' (Whitby 2000, p. xlv).

[77] John Moschos, *Spiritual Meadow* (col. 3105, trans. p. 191).

[78] John is particularly hostile to Ephraim of Antioch, describing him as 'Ephraim the persecutor' and 'the impious Ephraim': John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 35 (II, ed. and trans. p. 621); for the attack on Chalcedonian doctrine, see ibid. 5 (I, ed. and trans. p. 99).

[79] *οἱ ἐχθροὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοί εἰσι καὶ οἱ κατ' αὐτοὺς ἀρνούμενοι καὶ μὴ ὁμολογοῦντες τὸν Χριστὸν υἱὸν εἶναι τοῦ Θεοῦ*: *Life of Symeon* 226 (pp. 197–8, quote at 198). See Millar 2014, pp. 289–91. On Byzantine anti-Semitism, see Déroche 2011.

against a pagan enemy, while Déroche suggests that the hagiographer was in accord with the conciliatory efforts of local orthodox dignitaries such as the patriarchs Anastasios and Gregory.[80] 'Neo-Chalcedonian' authorities were trying to heal the divisions between Chalcedonians and miaphysites in Antioch in this period.[81] Various attempts were made by the emperors to reconcile the parties: thus Justinian patronized churches in the city which may have been intended to appeal to those of all Christological views.[82] Late sixth-century patriarchs made calls for Christian unity and an end to conflict over difficult points of doctrine. Thus Gregory urged his congregation to emulate the unquestioning worship of the cherubim and seraphim, and to abandon their internecine conflicts provoked by the Devil.[83] Similar arguments are found in the *Ecclesiastical History* of Gregory's close associate, and Symeon's friend, Evagrios Scholastikos, who, like the stylite's hagiographer, speaks very little of Christological conflict in his own times.[84] The silence of the *Life* on the subject of Christological controversy thus fits well into a broader context of efforts within Antioch to minimize the conflict between Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians.

This may not suffice, however, to explain the problem. The hagiographer may have had a more particular reason for not referring to miaphysites, related to his general concern to encourage as many visitors as possible to Symeon's shrine: he did not wish to alienate potential clients of the saint's cult. Recent scholarship has shown that saints' shrines often attracted Christians of different Christological opinions: Phil Booth, for example, has shown this to be the case of many cults, including that of Cosmas and Damian, and Elizabeth Key Fowden of the shrine of St Sergios at Resafa.[85] Even Severos of Antioch, the renowned miaphysite resistance leader, stated that anti-Chalcedonians could pray in martyr shrines run by Chalcedonians, although preferably when there were no Chalcedonians worshipping there: 'where the bones of holy martyrs have previously been laid, it is right to pray without hesitation, especially when the place is in silence, and the heretics are not unlawfully conducting services or singing inside.' He supports this view with the observation that Peter the Iberian had himself prayed in several martyr chapels (presumably run by Chalcedonians).[86] The Holy Places in Jerusalem were visited by anti-Chalcedonians even when under Chalcedonian control, although some miaphysites did begin to criticize this practice.[87] Admittedly, there might seem to be a difference between shrines relating to Christ and the early martyrs—who had

[80] Déroche 1996, p. 76; Cremonesi 2008, p. 263.
[81] See Allen 1981, pp. 21–44; Whitby 2000, pp. xxxvii–xlvii.
[82] Mayer 2009, pp. 362–66.
[83] See above p. 53.
[84] See especially Evagrios Scholastikos 2.5 (pp. 52–3), where Evagrios also claims that Christological conflict was caused by the Devil, with Whitby 2000, pp. xxxvii–xlvii and Ginter 2001.
[85] Booth 2011, pp. 117–28; Booth 2014, p. 54; Fowden 1999, pp. 156–7. Cf. also Perrone 1998, pp. 71–92; Caseau-Chevallier 2009, pp. 380–1.
[86] Severos, *Letters* 4.9 (I.II, p. 305; trans. II.II, p. 271).
[87] See Horn 2006, pp. 321–30; cf. also Kofsky 1997, pp. 216–19.

died long before Christological differences had crystallized and were thus of unquestionable orthodoxy—and those of living or recently deceased saints like Symeon, whose own opinions could have divided his potential clients. But by veiling Symeon's own views, his hagiographer could aspire to make him as neutral a saint as the early martyrs, in order to achieve the confessional plurality of their shrines.

It was not, in any case, only the shrines of long-deceased martyrs which attracted miaphysites to worship with Chalcedonians: even ordinary church services sometimes attracted a mixed clientele.[88] This should not be as surprising as it may initially appear. There is considerable evidence that Chalcedonians and miaphysites were not in practice as hostile to each other as the more polemical writings of some members on both sides might suggest. The pronouncements of the early sixth-century anti-Chalcedonian bishop John of Tella are revealing: he urges the 'orthodox' to avoid various forms of interaction with the 'heretics', including, for example, receiving alms from them. His rejection of these practices suggests that they were common at the time. Even he, however, concedes that it is acceptable for members of the different sects to greet each other warmly, and that Chalcedonian burial rites are preferable to no burial rites.[89] The early sixth-century *Life of Peter the Iberian*, although in general stridently anti-Chalcedonian, describes its hero, the miaphysite bishop Peter, as being friends with the Chalcedonian bishop of Orthosias, who even provided shelter for him after he was driven out of another town by a more hostile Chalcedonian prelate.[90] If bishops from rival parties could be friends, this must have been widespread among the general population. Jack Tannous has recently explored the many kinds of interactions that continued to take place between Christians of different confessions into the eighth and ninth centuries; he has also emphasized that individuals' 'confessional' loyalties could be much less important in many contexts than other ties, such as family, occupation, and location.[91] This evidence of a degree of respect and interaction between Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians confirms the impression that many were willing to worship together.

It is thus quite possible that Symeon's shrine had and may even have welcomed a multi-confessional clientele: indeed, there are suggestions in the *Life* that not all the beneficiaries of Symeon's miracles were Chalcedonians. He cures a man from Persia (very few Persian Christians were Chalcedonian—and of course many Persians were not Christian at all), two pagans, and, significantly, receives a visit

[88] See John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 5 (I, p. 102). John is, however, careful to emphasize that the miaphysites who came to hear the service in the Chalcedonian church did not take communion there. This practice was not uncontroversial: Severos of Antioch condemned the habit of some anti-Chalcedonians of going to hear prayers in Chalcedonian churches, and sometimes even of watching the Eucharist (although he made an exception if the anti-Chalcedonian in question happened to be a great man of state and was obliged to attend the church with the emperor): Severos, *Letters* 4.10 (I.II, 306–9).

[89] John of Tella, *Canons*, esp. 24–9 (pp. 78–84).

[90] John Rufus, *Life of Peter the Iberian* 141 (pp. 208–10).

[91] Tannous 2018, esp. pp. 92–110.

from eight Armenians.[92] Most Armenians did not accept Chalcedon; and even if these pilgrims were not anti-Chalcedonians, the fact that the hagiographer makes no reference to their doctrinal position suggests that this was not a key consideration for Symeon's shrine.[93] Notably, none of these supplicants are said to have been converted by Symeon; the holy man even tells the pagans that God 'approves of moral and just intentions on the part of *both believers and unbelievers*' [emphasis mine].[94]

Admittedly, the hagiographer does on other occasions describe supplicants converting from paganism before or after being cured, but, since conversion is not presented as a necessary pre-condition for all the stylite's cures, the hagiographer seems to have been less concerned to promote orthodoxy than to show that Symeon's gifts extended to all peoples.[95] This relatively tolerant attitude towards pagan supplicants does, it is true, seem to stand in sharp contradiction to the vehement hostility towards paganism evidenced elsewhere in the *Life*. This may be a sign that—as argued below—this anti-pagan hostility serves a particular polemical function within the text, irrespective of the actual position of 'pagans' at the cult.[96] Certainly, there is no evidence that the cult adopted an exclusionary policy towards Christians of different doctrinal beliefs.

Symeon himself may have abstained from making doctrinal pronouncements: none of the sermons attributed to him refer to Christological divisions, while the themes identified in Chapter 2 as the keystones of his preaching, including asceticism and the renunciation of wealth, crossed doctrinal boundaries. One important fragment of evidence does, however, paint a rather different picture. Sebastian Brock has published excerpts from a rare surviving monoenergist, monothelite florilegium in Syriac.[97] This contains several quotations in support of monoenergist doctrine attributed to sixth-century figures, including Justinian I and Symeon's friend Anastasios I of Antioch. One short quote in the collection is attributed to Symeon 'of the Wonderful Mountain', that is, Symeon the Younger himself.[98] It is apparently from a *memra* addressed to Barlaha the general, and contains specific doctrinal polemic, stating, for instance, that people who divide Christ's operations in two are like lost sheep. Even though this and most of the other texts in the collection are known from no other sources, Brock suggests that they may well be authentic: Chalcedonian monothelite texts are unlikely to have survived, especially in Greek, since dyotheletism later became the accepted

[92] For the healing of a Persian, see *Life of Symeon* 73 (p. 63); for pagans, ibid. 184 (p. 163); for Armenians, ibid. 237 (p. 213).

[93] The ecclesiastical situation in Armenia was complicated; for an introduction, see e.g. Thompson 2000, pp. 669–75; Greenwood 2012, pp. 119–26.

[94] *προαίρεσιν εὐγνώμονα καὶ ὀρθὴν ἀποδέχεται ἐπί τε πιστῶν καὶ ἀπίστων*: *Life of Symeon* 184 (p. 163).

[95] Ibid. 141, 143 (pp. 130–1).

[96] See below pp. 162–7.

[97] Brock 1985. For discussion see also Booth 2014, pp. 192–4; Tannous 2014.

[98] Brock 1985, pp. 42–3.

orthodoxy.[99] It is possible, therefore, that Symeon himself was more interested in theology than the surviving sermon collection and *Life* suggest. If this was the case, the hagiographer's silence on Christological matters appears even more purposeful and deliberate; his desire to encourage devotion to the cult took precedence over promoting specific doctrines.

Why, then, if the *Life* is not actively opposed to the anti-Chalcedonians, does it never mention Symeon the Elder? The explanation that he was ignored because his shrine was under anti-Chalcedonian control is not entirely convincing.[100] First, it should be noted that it is not certain that Qalaat Semaan was in fact run by anti-Chalcedonians at the time Symeon the Younger's hagiographer was writing.[101] Even if the shrine was now in the hands of miaphysites, this did not mean that the saint himself could no longer be venerated by Chalcedonians. Joseph Nasrallah has shown that the elder stylite continued to be venerated throughout the medieval period by the Byzantine and Melkite Chalcedonian churches.[102] He was certainly revered in the first half of the sixth century even by strongly pro-Chalcedonian hagiographers: Cyril of Scythopolis and Theodore of Petra both refer to the stylite in laudatory terms in their Lives of, respectively, Euthymios and Theodosios.[103]

Still more suggestively, Symeon the Younger's friend, Evagrios Scholastikos, talks about Symeon the Elder extensively in his *Ecclesiastical History*, with no suggestion that his reputation had come into question.[104] Indeed, Evagrios had actually visited the stylite's shrine at Qalaat Semaan. He describes its location, buildings, restrictions placed on female visitors, and the miracles which took place there: he himself saw a bright star several times running around the column during the commemorations in honour of Symeon. Others reported—and Evagrios notes that he saw no reason to disbelieve them—that the saint's disembodied head had been seen flying around the shrine.[105] Ephraim of Antioch, the Chalcedonian patriarch greatly praised by the Younger's hagiographer, also cited Symeon the Elder as an example of Chalcedonian piety in his efforts to persuade

[99] Ibid. 44; see also Tannous 2014, pp. 40–1.

[100] Henry 2015 (esp. p. 228) has, through a study of the archaeological evidence, convincingly argued against the view that Symeon the Younger's monastery was a copy of, or purposeful Chalcedonian rival to, Symeon the Elder's.

[101] See Whitby 2000, pp. xlii–iii—he argues that it is possible that Qalaat Semaan was only taken over by the miaphysites at the time of the Arab conquest of the region. Joseph Nasrallah has argued that while the monasteries of Teleda and Telneshe—both closely associated with Symeon the Elder—had become miaphysite early in the sixth century, there is no evidence that Qalaat Semaan itself was no longer Chalcedonian: Nasrallah 1971, esp. pp. 358–64.

[102] Ibid. pp. 347–58.

[103] Cyril of Scythopolis, *Life of Euthymios* (pp. 47–8); Theodore of Petra, *Life of Theodosios* (pp. 9–12).

[104] Evagrios Scholastikos, 1.13–4 (pp. 20–5).

[105] Ibid. 1.14 (pp. 23–5).

anti-Chalcedonians to rejoin the imperial Church.[106] Symeon the Elder had thus not fallen into disfavour among Chalcedonians in this period, and it is therefore unlikely that the Younger's hagiographer fails to refer to him for reasons related to Christology. In fact, if the Elder was disapproved of by any Christological party, it was among miaphysites: Severos of Antioch was forced to defend himself against anti-Chalcedonian opponents who criticized him for having pronounced a discourse in praise of the stylite.[107]

It is more probable that Symeon the Younger's hagiographer does not mention the elder Symeon for the same reason that he does not refer to any other holy ascetics: he did not wish to encourage rival cults, irrespective of doctrinal persuasion.[108] The Elder's shrine was a particular threat because it was so close.[109] The hagiographer is equally silent about other potential sources of thaumaturgic power in the Antiochene area, such as the relics of the monk Thomas, whose body had, according to Evagrios Scholastikos, been translated to Antioch during the prelacy of Ephraim, where it successfully ended an outbreak of the plague.[110] It may be significant that while John Moschos reports stories about Symeon which show him interacting with other holy monks, such tales are absent from the *Life*. In particular, it is hardly surprising that the *Life* does not report Moschos's story in which Symeon tells a visiting monk that he should have sought help at his own monastery instead:

> I am surprised at what toil you have endured, what a journey undertaken, to come to me, a mere sinful man, when you have such great fathers in your own lavra. Go, prostrate yourself before Abba Andrew, asking him to pray for you, and he will heal you at once.[111]

The author of the *Life*, eager to encourage as many visitors to Symeon as possible, implies that he should be visited by pilgrims from all regions: he tells us that Symeon assisted supplicants from places as far afield as Cappadocia, Laodicea, Iberia, Isauria, 'the land of the Ishamelites,' and, as we have seen, Persia and

[106] See Photios, *Bibliotheca* (IV, pp. 123, 142, 174). Ephraim refers to writings by Symeon defending Chalcedon; Evagrios Scholastikos also quotes a letter apparently written by the stylite in defence of the synod (Evagrios Scholastikos, 2.10 [pp. 61–2]).

[107] Severos of Antioch, Letters, 5.II (I.II, pp. 376–80).

[108] The only other ascetics mentioned in the *Life of Symeon* are Symeon's spiritual father, John (who is not, however, described as a prophet or miracle worker), and one other, rather unsuccessful, recluse: for the (limited) asceticism of the former, see esp. *Life of Symeon* 11 (p. 11), 17 (p. 14); for the latter, ibid. 169 (pp. 151–2).

[109] See Introduction, Figure 0.1 (above p. 3).

[110] Evagrios Scholastikos, 4.35 (p. 185). The myth of Thomas was certainly known at Symeon's monastery as it is referred to in the *Life of Martha* 24 (p. 271). Peeters tried to draw a connection between Martha and a popular story about Thomas's burial (Peeters 1927), but Van den Ven has shown this to be highly implausible (Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 78*–84*).

[111] John Moschos, *Spiritual Meadow* 117 (col. 2981; trans. pp. 96–7).

Armenia.[112] Admittedly, on one occasion when an Isaurian visitor asks the saint if his request will be ignored despite his journey across the sea, Symeon replied 'and who asked you all, man, to cross the sea?'.[113] Symeon does ultimately, however, do as he requests, and there is no suggestion that there was any other holy man who could have solved the Isaurian's problem. We know from John Moschos, Evagrios Scholastikos, John of Ephesus and many others that there was no shortage of sixth-century holy men: Evagrios states 'at that moment of time there were divinely inspired men and workers of great signs in many parts of the earth'.[114]

Indeed, there is considerable reason to think not only that there were many holy men at this time, but also that there was widespread contact between them, and that closely linked networks of spirituality were the norm.[115] Many saints' Lives do describe various holy men other than their heroes, and often present their saints as having contact with them. This is particularly true of anti-Chalcedonian hagiography, perhaps because the authors are often less concerned with promoting a particular cult than with showing the legitimacy of the miaphysite cause, an aim which could only be strengthened by suggesting that their anti-Chalcedonian heroes were friends of other unquestionably holy ascetics. Thus the *Life of Peter the Iberian* contains numerous descriptions of various holy friends of Peter's, including Melania the Younger and her close associate (and biographer) Gerontios, and the renowned ascetic Isaiah of Scetis.[116] So too the *Life of Severos of Antioch* talks extensively about Peter the Iberian, and other distinguished members of his monastery in Palestine (which Severos himself joined), including its superiors John the Canopite, John of Antioch, and Theodore of Ascalon, and one of its priests, Elisha.[117] But the theme is also present in Chalcedonian hagiography: Cyril of Scythopolis's Lives of Euthymios and Sabas contain, for example, many references to the holy friends of his heroes and to the distinguished religious careers of their associates and disciples.[118] John Moschos's stories about Symeon the Younger, just discussed, seem to confirm this picture of an integrated and often international network of holy people, in which the stylite played his part. The author of the *Life of Symeon*, however, ignored these ties, keen to present

[112] Cappadocia: *Life of Symeon* 43 (p. 41), 168 (p. 150), 191 (p. 169); Laodicea: ibid. 150 (p. 135), 169 (p. 151); Iberia: ibid. 103 (pp. 80–1), 253 (p. 220); Isauria: ibid. 227 (p. 198), 228 (p. 200), 192 (p. 170); Arabia: ibid. 201 (p. 176).

[113] *καὶ τίς ὑμᾶς ἐκάλεσεν, ἄνθρωπε, διαπερᾶσαι τὴν θάλασσαν*; ibid. 192 (p. 170).

[114] Evagrios Scholastikos, 4.33 (p. 182; trans. p. 237).

[115] On spiritual networks—though focusing on links within monastic communities—see Hevelone-Harper 2005, p. 6. For an argument that despite official attempts to limit monastic mobility, contacts between monasteries persisted and even intensified in the fifth and sixth centuries, see Fauchon-Claudon 2019.

[116] For Melania, see John Rufus, *Life of Peter the Iberian* 39–41 (pp. 52–8), 44 (p. 60); for Gerontios, ibid. 44–8 (pp. 60–4); for Isaiah, ibid. 138–9 (pp. 200–4), 167–9 (pp. 242–6).

[117] *Life of Severos of Antioch* (pp. 219–23, 224–7).

[118] See e.g. Cyril of Scythopolis, *Life of Euthymios* (pp. 11–12, 14–15, 16, 25–7, 35, 50–1, 55–6, 68); see also Flusin 1983, pp. 152–4.

Symeon as a unique source of holiness, in order to encourage visitors, of all doctrines and nationalities, to visit one shrine alone. In this context, it is less surprising than has been thought that he makes no direct reference to Symeon the Elder.

The *Life of Symeon the Younger* cannot be seen as a polemical intervention into contemporary Christological conflicts. Its author is concerned with promoting not a doctrine, but a cult, and it is this overriding aim which shapes his selection and presentation of events. He avoids referring to currently contested doctrinal issues, instead attacking only heresies such as Arianism and Manicheism which were unacceptable to almost all Christians in the eastern Roman empire. He also avoids referring to any holy men of the past or present who might threaten the supremacy of Symeon the Younger's reputation and cult. He presents him as a figure of unique holiness and thaumaturgic power, rather than acknowledging, perhaps more realistically, that he was only one of a fairly large and interconnected network of influential holy people. This does not mean, however, that the *Life* is a text untouched by controversy. In fact, it is a highly polemical work, intended to rebut a range of critics and opponents of the saint and, in particular, to defend his reputation in the face of his failure to prevent the exceptional series of crises that afflicted Antioch and its surroundings during his lifetime.

Opposition and Crisis

Recent scholarship has shown, convincingly, that Byzantine society did not accept the claims of holy men and their hagiographers uncritically; rather, saints had to tackle widespread scepticism even among 'orthodox' Christian believers.[119] Symeon the Younger was no exception; in fact, his Life suggests that the stylite had to face an exceptionally wide range of opponents, including monks within his own monastery, local farmers, clerics, and various other sceptics often denigrated as pagans.[120] Many of these problems were shared by other late antique holy men, but Symeon faced even more suspicion and disbelief than most, because of the plight of sixth-century Antioch, which was afflicted by invasion, numerous earthquakes, and plague. His hagiographer was forced to go to considerable lengths in his efforts to justify Symeon's failure to fulfil his duties as defender of the Christian people. Thus he attempts, not entirely successfully, to deal with difficult problems surrounding theodicy and Symeon's conflicting loyalties to God and to his supplicants by presenting the saint as fulfilling various, sometimes

[119] See in particular Dal Santo 2011a and 2012, esp. pp. 149–236; Sarris 2011c; Kaldellis 2014b. The extent of Christian scepticism about miracles was earlier highlighted by Dagron 1992.

[120] Cf. Van den Ven, 1962–70, I, pp. 163*–4*.

contradictory, roles drawn from the Old Testament, including those of Abraham and Job. As well as this defensive tack, he also uses more aggressive measures to combat criticisms of the saint, blaming the disasters on wicked members of the local community, stirring up social tensions, and going so far as to support the controversial Justinianic persecutions of 'pagans' and other outsiders. The *Life* can thus be viewed as a multifaceted, and sometimes contradictory, *apologia* for Symeon's all too human limitations. By setting the text in the broader context of responses to disasters in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, it may be possible to come to a better understanding of social and religious developments in this period. First, however, it is necessary to analyse in some detail the different kinds of opposition faced by Symeon, and the various ways in which his hagiographer handles them.

Before this analysis can be made, a key methodological problem must be addressed. As discussed in the introduction, the fundamental challenge of studying saints' cults through hagiography is that of distinguishing between the saint's own views and actions and those of the hagiographer. It is by now incontestable that hagiographic texts cannot in any sense be read as straightforward, factually accurate reports of the lives of holy men. This one reason why the rare surviving examples of holy men's own writings are so valuable.[121] Does this mean, then, that we cannot learn anything about Symeon the Younger himself from his Life? Not necessarily. Although his hagiographer undoubtedly selects and shapes his account in various distorting ways, he must nonetheless in some instances have been responding to real situations. In particular, it is probable that moments of extreme tension in the *Life*, which go far beyond literary trope, must reflect real challenges, even if they are described in potentially deceptive ways. As will be argued, many of these accounts display a decidedly apologetic tone, which seems impossible to explain except as a response to genuine controversy and real concerns about maintaining Symeon's reputation. Again, this is not to say that all accounts of opposition faced by Symeon in the *Life* should be taken at face value; indeed, at several points in the following discussion the accuracy of the hagiographer's presentation of events will be explicitly questioned. But it is to suggest that the sense of crisis in the *Life* cannot be dismissed and must relate to real challenges faced by the saint.

What is more difficult is to ascertain how far the hagiographer's *response* to these crises mirrors that of Symeon himself. Some aspects of his response, as discussed below, do find striking parallels in Symeon's own sermons, which suggests that he may have been continuing the saint's own policies. Other aspects find no extant parallels, and must therefore be attributed to the hagiographer rather than to the saint (although the possibility that they were derived from

[121] See above pp. 7, 55–6.

Symeon's own words and thoughts cannot be excluded). The relationship between the two is thus highly complex and must be constantly questioned as we proceed to an analysis of the *Life*'s presentation of hostility towards the saint.

Symeon and his Monastery

Symeon's hagiographer claims that his saint had to face considerable opposition from those who should have been most loyal to him: his own monastic disciples. Before examining this conflict in detail, we must consider the fundamental dependence of a stylite on his monks, to show how serious internal challenges to his authority could be. It is a striking feature of Peter Brown's justly famous article of 1971 that his holy men interact directly with the local lay community: in the article, he refers to no monks apart from the holy men themselves, except when he contrasts Egyptian coenobitic monasticism with independent Syrian ascetics.[122] Symeon the Younger's career shows, however, that holy men and coenobitic monasticism could be inextricably linked. An examination of Symeon's relations with his monastery shows that stylites could never achieve full separation from the world, because their duties and needs tied them to their monastic followers; their position was dependent on a mutually beneficial relationship with their disciples.[123]

Symeon's career was embedded in coenobitic monasticism. He entered the monastery of the stylite John as a boy and never left.[124] He appears to have inherited its leadership, although this is not stated explicitly in the text, as he later makes important decisions including arranging for the brotherhood to move to a new site on the 'Wonderful Mountain', and subsequently to build a splendid new monastery there.[125] It is significant that Symeon stayed in one community for his whole life: his famous predecessors, Symeon the Elder and Daniel, had both, by choice or by expulsion, departed from the monasteries they first joined to undergo a period of solitary struggle before returning to the public view and attracting new disciples.[126] This suggests that the account of the Younger's early career is not entirely formulaic, although the early part of his Life has been viewed as less reliable than later sections.[127] It also demonstrates that Whitby is right to stress the diversity of holy men's careers, as they could be more or less closely linked to particular monastic communities in their lifetime.[128] There has been a tendency to

[122] Brown 1971, pp. 82–3.
[123] Cf. Peña, Castellana, and Fernandez 1975, pp. 76–7.
[124] *Life of Symeon* 11 (p. 11).
[125] Ibid. 65–7 (pp. 56–8).
[126] For Symeon the Elder, see Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *History of the Monks of Syria* 26.5–12 (II, pp. 166–90); Antonios, *Life of Symeon* 6–12 (pp. 24–36); for Daniel, *Life of Daniel* 9 (pp. 9–10), and 21–6 (pp. 21–7).
[127] Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 105*.
[128] Whitby 1987, esp. p. 316.

perceive a shift over time from more individualistic ascetic practices towards coenobitic monasticism: even Rosemary Morris, who rightly stresses that we cannot trace a simple progression from lavriote to coenobitic monasticism, still suggests that it was not until the middle Byzantine period that stylites began to abandon their 'traditional withdrawn existence' for 'active involvement in the day-to-day affairs of a neighbouring monastery'.[129] She points to Paul of Latros, who died in the mid-tenth century, as an example, noting that his *stylos* was within his monastery.[130] Yet Symeon's Life reveals that this kind of monastically integrated lifestyle already existed in the sixth century.[131] We do not know where John and Symeon's columns were in the lower monastery, but Symeon's column was in the centre of the new monastery, as its remains show.[132]

He also took a direct role in the monastery's management.[133] The *Life* frequently shows him, for instance, refusing to let the monks accept gifts from visitors to the shrine. On one occasion his disciples decided to take some gifts in secret because their donors were distraught that Symeon had declined them; Symeon found out, and rebuked them severely.[134] Similarly, one of his monks, Julian, planned to take gold from cured patients until Symeon reprimanded him.[135] He forbad the brothers from thinking profane thoughts and reproached them when they disobeyed.[136] The holy man also provided grain and water for his monks when they were concerned about shortages and prevented them from enclosing the cistern to keep out visitors.[137] He protected the gardens of the lower monastery from a bear and other wild animals.[138] He discovered that one of the brothers was embezzling money intended to buy salt for the monastery and exposed him to the other monks.[139] Whatever one makes of the miraculous content of all of these episodes, they suggest that he was perceived to have a serious responsibility for the everyday management of the monastery. His position was closely tied to that of his community; his most basic role was that of hegumen.

His position as a stylite made him particularly dependent on his monks. As most stylites would not leave their pillars, they relied on their disciples' cooperation for practicalities, including, in Symeon's case, the reception of the monastery's numerous, often sick, visitors. Such great crowds came to be healed that the saint was forced to bless sticks to give to his disciples to help perform cures. Symeon (or perhaps his hagiographer) was keen, however, to emphasize that this did not mean that the disciples could rival the holy man's power or perform miracles without him. The *Life* states that the sticks needed to be touched and

[129] Morris 1995, p. 33. [130] Ibid. p. 61.
[131] On the adoption of stylitism by monks, see Boero 2015b, pp. 308–401; Menze 2015, esp. pp. 221–4.
[132] See above Introduction, Figures 0.2, 0.3 (pp. 4, 11).
[133] Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 165*–7*. [134] *Life of Symeon* 56 (pp. 49–50).
[135] Ibid. 93 (p. 73). [136] Ibid. 174 (p. 155).
[137] Ibid. 122–3 (pp. 100–6), 97–8 (pp. 75–6), 100 (pp. 77–8). [138] Ibid. 176 (pp. 155–6).
[139] Ibid. 175 (p. 155).

blessed by the saint after every three healings, or they would stop working; this was God's plan to prevent 'the brothers from being seized by any arrogant ideas'.[140] This suggests that it was potentially threatening to the saint's authority to let others perform miracles on his behalf, but because of his immobility this could not be avoided.

Equally, he required others to perform errands for him: he sent one brother, Anastasios, to convey a message to a lion which had been frightening the community; two others to rescue a monk who had collapsed from thirst; and another to buy salt.[141] Archaeological evidence confirms that stylites required at least a few disciples to attend them, belying the notion that they could ever achieve complete isolation from the world. Various sites for which little or no literary evidence survives have been excavated around Antioch which appear to have been the sites of stylites; while most of them do not seem to have received many outside visitors (as they lack the necessary amenities like guesthouses and baptisteries) they do have small facilities for the stylite's assistants.[142]

Of course, this was not a one-sided relationship: while Symeon was dependent on his monks for these practicalities, he supplied them with the benefits of his spiritual powers, in the form of both miracles and teaching, which may also have played an important economic role in drawing visitors and potential donors to the shrine.[143] The *Life* focuses strongly on the former of these, but, as mentioned above, many authors of *vitae* emphasized miracle-working over the other important duties of holy men, in order to promote pilgrimage to their shrines.[144] In fact, a comparison of the *Life*, his sermons, and other contemporary references suggests that Symeon's essential role was that of 'teacher', as Rousseau argues was generally the case for holy men.[145] Significantly, the three stories concerning Symeon in John Moschos's *Spiritual Meadow* focus less on his miraculous powers than on his advice to nearby monks. One is entirely non-miraculous: Symeon advises Abba Julian how to react to his quarrel with Makarios, archbishop of Jerusalem, instructing him 'do not withdraw from the monastery, nor should you distance yourself from the holy church'.[146] The other two stories do contain miracles, but unlike Symeon's biographer, who often describes the processes of miracles in vivid detail, Moschos mentions them only in passing, almost as incidental to the main matter of interest, Symeon's advice.[147] On one occasion, Symeon tells a visiting monk who asks him to expel a demon to return to his own *lavra* and seek help

[140] *τὸ . . . κατασχεθῆναι τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ἐπάρσεως λογισμῷ*: ibid. 50 (p. 46).
[141] Ibid. 68 (pp. 58–9), 170 (p. 152), 175 (p. 155).
[142] Peña, Castellana, and Fernandez 1975, pp. 76–7; Callot and Gatier 2004, p. 584.
[143] For discussion of the funding model of the cult, see below pp. 143–7.
[144] For the *Life*'s focus on miracles, see Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 181*; on hagiographers' predominant focus on miracles, Rapp 1999, p. 65 and above p. 55.
[145] Rousseau 1999b. [146] John Moschos, *Spiritual Meadow* 96 (cols 2953–6, trans. p. 77).
[147] For examples of detailed accounts of miracles, see *Life of Symeon* 138 (p. 129), 231 (pp. 204–8), 249 (p. 219).

there; the brother is eventually cured by the prayer of Abba Andrew, who attributes the cure to Symeon.[148] Another time, Symeon perceives through divine knowledge that a visitor to his shrine is a monk who has abandoned his monastery; the focus of the tale, however, is on his reassurances to the monk that he will be welcomed back if he returns, as he should, to his community: 'Believe me, child, you do not have to feel disgrace for this. The fathers will receive you with smiling faces and gladness at your return.'[149] Symeon's sermon collection, and the references to preaching in his Life, confirm that moral advice was the ultimate basis of his influence. Much of his preaching seems to be targeted in particular at his monks, extolling the monastic life but also warning against the dangers of disruptive behaviour and yielding to demonic temptations.[150] His starkly dualistic rhetoric, and claims to have had personal experience of battles with demons, confirmed his authority as visionary preacher and spiritual guide.

In theory, therefore, the stylite and his monks enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship: the monks attended to the saint's practical needs and he to their spiritual ones.[151] Stylites and coenobitism thus went hand in hand: indeed, Ignace Peña may not have been going too far in stating that 'une des caractéristiques du mouvement stylite est d'avoir été le promoteur de la vie monastique organisée'.[152] Yet Symeon did not gain easy or uncontested authority within his monastery. He faced considerable opposition throughout his career, not only from external sceptics, who will be discussed shortly, but from the very men closest to him. This opposition developed over time: in Symeon's youth, it mostly manifested itself as jealousy of his lifestyle; later, when he ran the monastery, it related to his management and to factional divisions within the brotherhood.

Symeon's behaviour, according to the *Life*, caused troubles within the monastery from his arrival. As a youth, when the elder John was still the superior, Symeon was reprimanded for disturbing the other monks through the extremity of his ascetic practice. John instructed him to stop chanting psalms throughout the night, since he was stopping the brothers from getting any sleep.[153] John also twice rebuked him for making inappropriate inquiries, once for asking why the Devil plotted so zealously against the saints, and the second time for enquiring who was worthy to receive the spirit of God as the apostles had.[154] Such complaints suggest that his individualistic, independent manner was not deemed appropriate in a coenobitic setting. Indeed, the *Life* reports that his ascetic lifestyle provoked real hatred among the monks: one, 'who, when he had seen the child's way of life, was

[148] John Moschos, *Spiritual Meadow* 117 (col. 2981).
[149] Ibid. 118 (col. 2981, trans. pp. 97–8).
[150] See above pp. 83–90.
[151] Peña, Castellana, and Fernandez 1975, pp. 76–7; Binggeli 2009, pp. 429–31.
[152] Peña, Castellana, and Fernandez 1975, p. 76.
[153] *Life of Symeon* 17 (p. 14).
[154] Ibid. 22 (p. 18), 32 (pp. 31–2).

struck by a diabolic jealousy', attempted to murder the young Symeon.[155] On another occasion, the monks refused John's command to help Symeon during a storm, saying to each other that he would die, and, 'moved by the Evil One, they even said the following: "Where is his holiness, and the madness of his ascetic practice?" Let him help and save himself.'[156]

We should not, however, necessarily trust these reports: they may be drawn from hagiographic convention and in particular from the example of Symeon Stylites the Elder.[157] Symeon the Elder's outstanding asceticism, according to his hagiographers, had caused serious tensions in his first monastery, although all three provide rather different details.[158] Theodoret reports that the superiors of the monastery ordered him to leave as they were unable to tolerate his extreme asceticism.[159] In the Syriac *Life*, in contrast, it is the ordinary monks who are jealous of the saint's prowess and the abbot is much more sympathetic, although eventually forced to expel him.[160] In Antonios's *Life* it is the regular monks who first turn against Symeon, but the abbot joins them when he is alerted to the extremity of his behaviour.[161] The basic point, however, that Symeon's extreme ascetic practice provoked jealousy and hostility in his monastery, resulting in his expulsion, is shared between the three. These accounts of jealousy about Symeon the Elder's exceptional prowess may well have inspired the Younger's hagiographer; certainly, his report that Symeon was rebuked by John for wrapping himself harshly in rope is highly reminiscent of an episode recounted in all three Lives of the Elder.[162] The details of early opposition to Symeon are not, therefore, necessarily entirely reliable. Nonetheless, we should not be too ready to disregard the entire theme as merely trope. Tropes often reflect reality.[163] It is certainly not inherently implausible that Symeon's harsh way of life could have prompted envy or hostility; it may well have been genuinely uncomfortable for a rigorous ascetic to be incorporated into a monastery.[164]

This impression becomes still stronger when we look at reports of conflict once Symeon had become hegumen, conflicts which the hagiographer associates with his management of the monastery. As we have seen, he depicts the monks repeatedly challenging Symeon's refusal to accept gifts from visitors; they also often appear concerned about provisioning the monastery. An incident concerning the supply of water for all the visitors and builders at the new shrine is both

[155] *ὃς ἑωρακὼς τὴν τοῦ παιδίου διαγωγὴν φθόνῳ βάλλεται διαβολικῷ*: ibid. 14 (pp. 12–13).

[156] *ἔλεγον δὲ καὶ ταῦτα ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ κινούμενοι· "Ποῦ ἐστιν ἡ ἁγιωσύνη αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς ἀσκήσεως ἡ μανία; Βοηθησάτω καὶ σωσάτω αὐτόν"*: ibid. 23 (p. 19).

[157] Harvey 1998, pp. 535–6 n. 47.

[158] See Boero 2015b, pp. 92–105.

[159] Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *History of the Monks of Syria* 26.5 (II, pp. 166–70).

[160] Syriac *Life of Symeon* (pp. 520–5).

[161] Antonios, *Life of Symeon* 6–8 (pp. 24–30).

[162] Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *History of the Monks of Syria* 26.5 (pp. 166–70); Syriac *Life of Symeon* (p. 522); Antonios, *Life of Symeon* 5 (p. 24) 8 (pp. 28–30); *Life of Symeon* 26 (pp. 23–3); Van den Ven 162–70, I, p. 171*.

[163] Morris 1995, p. 77.

[164] Whitby 1987, p. 313.

typical and revealing: we are told that 'the disciples of the saint were worried where to provide water from to meet the needs of so many helpers'.[165] The problem of the provision of water was Symeon's responsibility not only because he was hegumen, but because it was the result of his decision to move up the mountain: 'for the source of the waters was at the foot of the mountain at a considerable distance.'[166] This reveals one way in which the pursuit of Symeon's ascetic struggle could have inconvenienced the monastery as a whole; it is not, therefore, implausible that his administration could have provoked unease.

Certainly, concerns about provisioning the monastery are presented as important to the biggest internal challenger of Symeon's authority, who has already been mentioned several times: the monk Angoulas.[167] Angoulas appears at various points in the text as a sceptic and opponent of Symeon's: on one occasion he doubts the efficacy of one of Symeon's cures.[168] The most extended description of Angoulas's troublesome behaviour, however, involves another dispute about monastic funding. The *Life* reports that Satan inspired Angoulas:

> And he stirred up the brotherhood against the holy servant of God. And the brothers rose up against him, against his great charity, saying, 'Who can subsist like this? And where does this happen to those seeking healing? Not in the holy city, nor in the monasteries, nor in the Lord's houses [churches].'[169]

They stated that in all these other places supplicants brought their own food and left a gift. After Symeon rebuked them, saying that as monks they had to be charitable and support the crowds, 'Angoulas spoke very harsh words to the saint, saying that he would not do any such thing'.[170] This passage is highly significant: it presents the entire brotherhood in opposition to Symeon because of his atypical and impractical management of monastic affairs, led by a figure who was prepared to deny his authority. This suggests that the role of stylite was not so authoritative or popular that he could easily command respect, and that individual asceticism was indeed difficult to fit into a coenobium.

Can we, however, trust the hagiographer's report of these disturbances? Déroche has argued that the author is highly partial and invents Symeon's ire against Angoulas because of factional divisions which erupted in the monastery

[165] *οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ τοῦ ἁγίου ἐμερίμνουν πόθεν ὕδωρ κομίσαι πρὸς τὴν χρείαν τῆς τοιαύτης ὑπουργίας*: *Life of Symeon* 97 (p. 75).

[166] *ἦν γὰρ ἡ πηγὴ τῶν ὑδάτων παρὰ τὰς ῥίζας τοῦ ὄρους ἐκ πολλῶν διαστημάτων*: ibid. 97 (p. 75).

[167] See above pp. 116–17. See also Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 164–5.

[168] *Life of Symeon* 168 (pp. 150–1).

[169] *καὶ ἐκταράττει τὴν ἀδελφότητα κατὰ τοῦ ἁγίου δούλου τοῦ Θεοῦ. Καὶ ἐπανίστανται οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτῷ ἐπὶ τῇ πολλῇ ἐλεημοσύνῃ αὐτοῦ λέγοντες· 'Τίς ὑποστήσεται οὕτως; Ποῦ δὲ ταῦτα γίνεται εἰς τοὺς δεομένους ἰάσεως; οὐδὲ ἐν τῇ ἁγίᾳ πόλει, οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς μοναστηρίοις, οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς κυριακοῖς οἴκοις'*: ibid. 123 (p. 103).

[170] *Ἀγγουλὰς ἔλεγε τῷ ἁγίῳ τραχυτέρους λόγους, φάσκων μὴ ποιεῖν τι τοιοῦτον*: ibid. 123 (p. 104).

after Symeon's death.[171] He focuses particularly on the passage in the *Life* in which Symeon predicts that Angoulas 'will become a traitor and a Judas to this place; and such events will occur here through him, that his blasphemies will be talked about almost everywhere. Alas for his soul; for how many souls it will become a cause of scandal!';[172] the hagiographer continues to say that this indeed came true shortly after Symeon's death.[173] Déroche is certainly right to be wary of this prophecy and to suggest that a *Life* written by one of Angoulas's followers would have been very different. Nonetheless, his argument that it is not possible that Angoulas had quarrelled with Symeon during the holy man's life is not entirely compelling. He claims that had the monk been so disobedient to his superior, he would either have been expelled or rebuked before all the other brothers, but that this did not take place.[174] But expulsion was not a common form of punishment in all monastic communities: it seems, for example, to have been rare in the Pachomian federation.[175] A hegumen might be reluctant to expel a disobedient brother either on religious grounds (forgiveness is an important monastic virtue) or on more practical ones: as we have seen, Symeon was dependent upon the support of his disciples and therefore could not necessarily autocratically expel a dissenting monk, particularly if he had numerous sympathizers among the brotherhood.[176]

In addition, Déroche appears to be mistaken to say that Symeon could not have rebuked Angoulas publicly because the *Life* would have said so. It is true that the saint's prophecy about future strife was made to only two other brothers; yet during the debate about accepting gifts, Angoulas was indeed reprimanded before the community:

> Making the sign of the cross, [Symeon] said to Angoulas, 'The demon/Devil speaking through you is easily spotted; alas for your soul, because you have become his instrument.' Then he said to the rest of the brothers, 'Behold, like the Lord I say to you: "Give the crowds something to eat."'[177]

On another occasion, moreover, the Devil tells Symeon in a vision that he will begin his attack on the monastery 'through Angoulas, the one who always obeys

[171] Déroche 1996, p. 75.

[172] *γενήσεται προδότης καὶ Ἰούδας τοῦ τόπου τούτου· καὶ τοιαῦτα γενήσονται ἐνταῦθα δι' αὐτοῦ, ἵνα σχεδὸν ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ λαληθῶσιν αἱ βλασφημίαι αὐτοῦ. Οὐαὶ δὲ τῇ ψυχῇ αὐτοῦ· πόσων ψυχῶν γίνεται αἰτία σκανδάλου*: *Life of Symeon* 240 (p. 216).

[173] Ibid. 240 (p. 216).

[174] Déroche 1996, p. 75.

[175] Rousseau 1999a, pp. 96–8. Pachomios is depicted refusing to expel disobedient brothers in his Bohairic *Life* 102 (pp. 128–9). In comparison, Shenoute seems to have used expulsion much more readily in his monastic federation (although this may have met with opposition): Schroeder 2007, pp. 75–82.

[176] For forgiveness as a monastic virtue, see e.g. Burton-Christie 1993, pp. 275–6.

[177] *ποιήσας τὴν ἐν Χριστῷ σφραγῖδα εἶπε πρὸς τὸν Ἀγγουλάν· "Ὁ μὲν λαλῶν διὰ σοῦ δαίμων εὔδηλός ἐστιν· οὐαὶ δὲ τῇ ψυχῇ σου, ὅτι γέγονας αὐτῷ ὄργανον." Εἶτα λέγει τοῖς λοιποῖς ἀδελφοῖς· "Ἰδοὺ ὡς ὁ Κύριος ὑμῖν λέγω· "Δότε φαγεῖν τοῖς ὄχλοις"*': *Life of Symeon* 123 (p. 104). Cf. Matthew 14:16.

me'; Symeon reports this to the brothers, only for Angoulas to retort rudely.[178] The argument that the hagiographer must have invented Symeon's conflict with Angoulas is not, therefore, compelling, although this remains a possibility.

Irrespective of whether the hagiographer exaggerates Angoulas's involvement, Symeon did face serious opposition among his monks. The debate about the receiving of gifts is not the only allusion in the *Life* to widespread hostility to the saint. In subsequent chapters, the hagiographer makes other, rather cryptic, references to resistance to Symeon among the brotherhood. In one crucial but complicated passage, which will be discussed in more detail below, the Devil successfully requests permission from God to test Symeon, declaring, 'I will enter into his disciples and turn them savage, into a species of men-demons'.[179] He later addresses the saint himself, threatening, 'even if I cannot do anything against you yourself . . . I will nonetheless stir up tribulations for you on the part of men that you will not be able to endure; *I will agitate the brotherhood around you, and make them rear up their necks, to torment your soul*' [emphasis mine].[180] This is far from typical hagiographic cliché, and does suggest that there was a serious movement of opposition to the saint from within the monastery.

Funding the Monastery

Did this conflict really relate to the question of whether the monks should accept gifts from supplicants and pilgrims? This is difficult to answer and raises wider questions about the economic foundation of the monastery. There have been few comprehensive studies of the economic bases of early Syrian monasteries, although more has been done for Egypt and Palestine.[181] Hagiography is notoriously problematic as a source for economic history, both because hagiographers were uninterested in a realistic appraisal of the subject, and because money and wealth were highly ideologically charged topics. We thus cannot necessarily take at face value Symeon's hagiographer's depiction of the financial workings of the monastery.

The hagiographer presents Symeon as being vehemently opposed to money and to economic transactions. This is shown not only by his repeated insistence that

[178] *ἀπὸ τοῦ ὑπακούοντός μου ἀεὶ Ἀγγουλὰ*: *Life of Symeon* 128 (p. 116).

[179] *εἰσελεύσομαι εἰς τοὺς μαθητάς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκθηριώσω αὐτοὺς ἐν γένει δαιμόνων καὶ ἀνθρώπων*: *Life of Symeon* 124 (p. 110). For further discussion see below pp. 156–61.

[180] *εἰ γὰρ μηδὲν ἰσχύσω κατὰ σοῦ . . . ἀλλὰ ἀναστήσω σοι τοσαύτας θλίψεις ἐκ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἃς οὐ μὴ δυνηθῇς βαστάσαι, καὶ τὴν περὶ σὲ δὲ ταράξας ἀδελφότητα ποιήσω τραχηλιάσαι, ὥστε στενοχωρηθῆναί σου τὴν ψυχήν*: ibid. 125 (pp. 110–11).

[181] There is some discussion of the economies of Syrian monasteries in e.g. Vööbus 1960, pp. 159–6; Escolan 1999, pp. 183–225. On Egypt, see e.g. Wipszycka 2009, pp. 471–565. On Palestine, see e.g. Hirschfield 1992.

pilgrims should not bring gifts to thank him, but also by his unusual reply to a stone-cutter who asked for his help in regaining his stolen salary: 'the Son of God did not send me to settle questions about money, but to heal those who are sick.'[182] In this last instance, he does then help the man to find his money, but it is interesting to note that miracles relating to lost money, although popular in much late antique hagiography, are very rare in the *Life*.[183] Strikingly, the same hostility to money is reflected in the *Life of Martha*: Symeon states that he was initially reluctant to engage in any building projects, only becoming reconciled to the idea once God had promised that no money would have to be involved.[184] Both the *Life of Symeon* and the *Life of Martha* claim that the substantial construction works carried out on the 'Wonderful Mountain' were the product of voluntary work by pilgrims (many of them from Isauria) who had been cured and wanted to thank the saint.[185]

But is this picture of a radically money-spurning hegumen, who refused to accept gifts (apart from labour hours and construction materials for building) plausible? If a monastery was not to accept gifts, it could only provide for itself and its guests through its monks' own labour. Symeon's monastery does, like other monasteries associated with stylites, seem to have engaged in agriculture.[186] The *Life* contains several references to cultivated gardens and fields attached to the lower monastery.[187] The reference to conflict with leaders of nearby villages 'because of the pasturings [?: *νομὰς*] of the Wonderful Mountain' may also reflect agricultural activity.[188] The monks appear to have performed at least some of the farm labour themselves.[189] The monks thus provided for some of their own needs, and it is not impossible to believe that before Symeon's rise to prominence, their

[182] *οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλέ με ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ δίκας χρημάτων ἐλέγξαι, ἀλλ' ἰάσασθαι τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας*: *Life of Symeon* 180 (p. 160). For Symeon's refusal to accept gifts from pilgrims, see above pp. 137, 140–1.

[183] The only examples occur in *Life of Symeon* 180–1 (pp. 159–61). In 179 (pp. 158–9) a woman asks Symeon to help avenge a theft, but he discerns miraculously that she was lying about the crime.

[184] *Life of Martha* 64 (pp. 306–7).

[185] *Life of Symeon* 96 (pp. 74–5), 110–11 (pp. 89–90), 172–3 (pp. 154–5), 192 (pp. 170–1), 228 (pp. 200–1); *Life of Martha* 47 (pp. 288–9), 49 (pp. 290–1). These claims have been accepted by various archaeologists working on Symeon's cult site (Lafontaine-Dosogne 1967, pp. 84–5; Djobadze 1986, p. 58; cf. also Schachner 2010, p. 361), but, to my knowledge, this is based purely on the hagiographic sources. On the Isaurian builders, see C. Mango 1966.

[186] Schachner 2010, pp. 363–5.

[187] That is, the monastery of Symeon's predecessor John, in which Symeon too had lived before moving up to the 'Wonderful Mountain', whereupon he appointed an older monk as guardian of the lower monastery: *Life of Symeon* 66 (p. 57). For its fields and gardens, see ibid. 176 (p. 155), 182 (p. 161), 178 (p. 157).

[188] Ibid. 125 (p. 112).

[189] Ibid. 174 (p. 155) refers to the brothers 'doing work/a task in the lower convent [*ποιούντων αὐτῶν ἔργον ἐν τῇ κατωτέρᾳ μονῇ*]'. This challenges Escolan's contention that Syrian monks very rarely worked, subsisting almost entirely from alms (although he is correct to note that Syrian saints' lives do not emphasize the value of work to the same extent as many Egyptian hagiographers): Escolan 1999, pp. 183–201.

monastery, under John, could have been largely self-sufficient, if their buildings (which do not survive) were modest and self-built.[190]

Yet comparative evidence would suggest that, at least by the time of the move to the 'Wonderful Mountain' and the building of a new monastic complex, Symeon's monastery must have relied upon gifts as well as agricultural income. The new monastery was relatively lavish: Djobadze notes the 'high quality' of some of its mosaic decoration and the use of 'imported' coloured marbles.[191] There is near complete consensus among archaeologists, papyrologists, and literary historians that gifts and patronage were essential to monastic economies, especially in the case of large, luxuriously decorated establishments which provided considerable amount of charitable support to the poor and to pilgrims.[192] Different monasteries relied on different sources of patronage. Emperors, of course, were important patrons of some monasteries, as is often attested in hagiography.[193] But emperors did not patronize all monasteries equally, and it is unlikely that Symeon the Younger benefited seriously from this source.[194] Unfortunately, there is no certain evidence for the date of the building of the monastery, but the internal evidence from the *Life* suggests that the first main building stage took place during the period from roughly 541 to 551, during the reign of Justinian.[195] It is unlikely that this emperor contributed to the constructions given his decidedly cool portrayal by the hagiographer.[196]

Ayşe Henry in an important recent study has emphasized that different phases of building at the site may have been sponsored by different patrons, and suggests that the second period of building work on the site, in the 560s, may have received support from Constantinople.[197] Donations by emperors after Justinian cannot be ruled out (and one intriguing reference in the *Life* to Symeon sending three monks to Constantinople 'on some business concerning the good of souls' might suggest an attempt to find imperial or senatorial patronage), but there is no positive evidence for them.[198] Wealthy nobles were a key source of patronage for

[190] In his useful survey article, Brenk notes the variety in possible economic models for monasteries, suggesting that some smaller monasteries could perhaps have subsisted largely from agriculture: Brenk 2004. Some modest and apparently largely self-sufficient monasteries on the Sinai peninsula are described by Dahari 2000, esp. pp. 157–8, 163, 167—although even here it is possible that he has underestimated the significance of gifts to the monks.

[191] Djobadze 1986, pp. 77, 80, 96.

[192] See e.g. the conclusion to Brenk 2004, p. 472.

[193] See e.g. *Life of Daniel* 38 (p. 35), 44 (pp. 41–2), 54 (p. 53), 57–8 (pp. 55–7), 92 (pp. 86–7); Cyril of Scythopolis, *Life of Sabas* (pp. 143, 175–9); George of Sykeon, *Life of Theodore of Sykeon* 54 (pp. 46–7), 82 (pp. 69–79).

[194] On Justinian's variable patronage, see Hatlie 2007, pp. 46ff.

[195] If, at least, we can trust the chronology of the *Life*, which states that Symeon moved to the top of the 'Wonderful Mountain' aged twenty and lived there on a rock for ten years as the new monastery was built before moving onto his final column: as he seems to have been born in *c.*521, this would suggest the monastery was largely finished in 551. See *Life of Symeon* 112–13 (pp. 90–3), 258 (p. 223), with Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 124*–30*.

[196] See above pp. 124–5.

[197] Henry 2015, pp. 89–96.

[198] *Διά τινας ψυχωφελεῖς χρείας*: *Life of Symeon* 232 (p. 208).

monasteries throughout the empire, and their generous donations are, again, often commemorated by hagiographers.[199] Yet, as will be argued below, the *Life of Symeon* betrays such an unusually hostile attitude to the local nobility, an attitude which may derive from the saint's own views, that it is difficult to envision strong ties connecting the monastery to members of the Antiochene secular elites. Unlike most saints' Lives of the period, it contains no stories praising nobles who gave gifts to the saint, and it is very difficult to read it as a patronage-seeking document. Even if the *Life* does not reflect the real situation in Symeon's lifetime, it seems that by the time the hagiographer was writing, seeking noble patronage was not a priority.

Who is left? The patronage of monasteries by leading churchmen was not unknown, if perhaps less common than lay patronage; some bishops even founded monasteries.[200] Given Symeon's apparently good relations with several prominent bishops, this could have been a source of revenue, although again there is no evidence for it in the sources.[201] Henry has made an interesting argument based largely on contextual factors that Ephraim, patriarch from 527 to 545, supported the beginning of the first phase of the building project.[202] Ephraim is certainly depicted in very positive terms in the *Life*, and Henry argues that his need to rebuild and to promote Antiochene Christianity after the disaster of the Persian sack of 540 provides a plausible context for the building of the new monastic church complex. Yet she herself acknowledges that Ephraim is very unlikely to have patronised the building work directly, since this is neither mentioned in the *Life* nor commemorated in any surviving inscription from the site. Her interpretation would necessitate that the building work had begun before 545, the year of Ephraim's death; it certainly is very unlikely to have received Antiochene patriarchal support between 545 and 559, during the patriarchate of Domninos, since this patriarch was so vehemently excoriated by Symeon's hagiographer.[203]

The only remaining source of donations would seem to be the regular stream of pilgrims and supplicants who visited Symeon's shrine.[204] If these supplicants are envisaged as being primarily of low or medium income, a considerable number of visitors would be required to pay for, for example, the building projects on the mountain. But Symeon's Life does claim that the saint did receive a vast quantity of visitors, and the archaeological evidence of the pilgrim tokens from the shrine

[199] See e.g. Kallinikos, *Life of Hypatios* 12.12–13 (pp. 118–20), 15.9 (p. 126), 51.7 (p. 290); *Life of Daniel* 29–30 (pp. 29–30), 36 (p. 34), 94 (p. 88); George of Sykeon, *Life of Theodore of Sykeon* 120 (pp. 96–7).

[200] See e.g. Vööbus 1960, p. 161.

[201] *Life of Symeon* 25 (pp. 21–2), 34 (p. 33), 71 (pp. 60–2), 134 (pp. 126–7), 202 (pp. 176–7), 204 (pp. 177–8), 206 (p. 178).

[202] Henry 2015, pp. 83–7; Belgin-Henry 2019.

[203] Henry suggests that some lower-quality work at the site could have been produced during this period after the removal of patriarchal patronage: Henry 2015, esp. p. 89; Belgin-Henry 2019, pp. 65–6.

[204] Boero and Kuper 2020, p. 388, argue that the hagiographer successfully 'model[ed] manual labour at the cult site as a form of thanksgiving'.

may support this.[205] It is, perhaps, not impossible to envision a monastery that subsisted primarily from large numbers of relatively small gifts by ordinary supplicants.

This does, however, call into question the hagiographer's claims about Symeon's refusal to accept gifts. Two interpretative possibilities are possible. The first would be to accept much of what the hagiographer does say, including his claims that the building of the monastery was made possible by the donation of materials and manpower by healed supplicants. If Symeon really did refuse to accept more gifts than this, it might well have provoked hostility among his monks, who could have seen that this was an unrealistic economic strategy. Yet it ultimately seems more plausible that this conflict over the acceptance of gifts was largely staged by the hagiographer. It is relatively common in hagiography for saints to be presented as free sources of spiritual help, even if rare for this to be insisted on so vehemently as in the *Life of Symeon*. As Déroche suggests, however, this is often little more than a rhetorical platitude.[206] In this case, therefore, it is likely that the hagiographer is treating a real conflict between Symeon and his monks, but veiling its causes, by attributing it to a factor which show the saint in an unambiguously positive light: his superabundant charity. The true circumstances which involved the monks becoming 'men-demons' may therefore be lost to us. Symeon's career thus shows both that a stylite could be fully integrated into a coenobitic monastery, and that this was liable to cause serious difficulties and tensions.

External Opposition

The tensions within his monastery were far from the only conflict in Symeon's career. He seems to have experienced hostility from a diverse range of groups outside his monastery, on varying grounds. Like many other holy men and churchmen, he provoked economic resentment as the new monastery encroached on locals' pastures.[207] Thus the *Life* tells us that 'the Devil began . . . to stir up the leaders of the surrounding towns over pasturing [?] on the Wonderful Mountain on which the monastery of the blessed man was situated'.[208] This economic conflict with the local farmers is not, however, a main theme of the *Life*. More common are instances of tension between Symeon and various members of the local clergy.[209] Thomas, a priest from the village of Paradeisos, was 'seized by a

[205] On Symeon's pilgrim tokens, see esp. Lafontaine-Dosogne 1967, pp. 140–58, 169–96; Vikan 1984, pp. 67–74; Volbach 1996.

[206] Déroche 2006.

[207] Brown 1995, pp. 62–4; Sarris 2011c.

[208] *ἤρξατο ὁ διάβολος . . . τοὺς ἡγουμένους τῶν κύκλῳ πόλεων κινεῖν διὰ τὰς νομὰς τοῦ ὄρους τοῦ Θαυμαστοῦ ἐν ᾧ ἡ μονὴ ἵδρυται τοῦ μακαρίου*: *Life of Symeon* 125 (p. 112).

[209] Cf. Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 164*.

diabolic jealousy' and anathematized Symeon.[210] Similarly, an unnamed priest from the village of Kassa became very envious when he heard about Symeon's miracles, criticized him, and finally, under the influence of a devil, anathematized the saint.[211] Both, unsurprisingly, were immediately afflicted by divine punishments, as were the deacon Epiphanios, from a village called Euthalion near Antioch, and John, a deacon of the Holy Church of God in Antioch, both of whom spoke abusively about the saint, the latter to the point of writing to him 'a letter full of many insults and blasphemous words'.[212] Two other stories may be suggestive of similar tensions. In one, a Georgian priest who starts, in his own country, a miracle-working shrine with a lock of Symeon's hair, excites the envy of his local priests because 'crowds were going to that place and giving offerings'; the priests denounce him to their bishop as a magician; the bishop then imposes sanctions on him until the bishop himself falls ill and repents.[213] Finally, in a rather different story, Symeon exposes John, a priest and *oikonomos* (steward) from the Church of Apamea, who has come to visit him, as a wicked idolater.[214]

It is difficult to know what to make of these stories. Apart from the last-mentioned case (in which the priest is not in fact openly hostile to Symeon), the accounts are suggestive of the well-documented resentment felt by some non-monastic clergymen towards holy men, on the grounds that the latter's charismatic authority was drawing away influence, power, and wealth from them.[215] The account set in Iberia certainly explicitly states that it was economic considerations (as well as the work of the Devil) that provoked the envy of the Georgian priests. The stories about the local priests from near Symeon's monastery are less direct, but the repeated references to jealousy may suggest that similar factors were at play. This is certainly the reading of Philippe Escolan, who posits a seriously hostile relationship between Symeon and the clergy, although his argument rests in part on an apparent misinterpretation of chapter 224 of the *Life*.[216] It is very plausible that rivalry could have existed between Symeon and other local priests.

This is not to say that the stylite lived in tension with the entire Church; in fact, the text provides considerable evidence of integration between the two.[217]

[210] *φθόνῳ διαβολικῷ φερόμενος*: *Life of Symeon* 116 (p. 95). [211] Ibid. 239 (pp. 214–15).

[212] *ἐπιστολὴν . . . πολλῶν ὕβρεων πεπληρωμένην καὶ βλασφήμων λόγων*: ibid. 225 (p. 196). For Epiphanios, see ibid. 195 (pp. 172–3); for John, ibid. 225 (pp. 196–7).

[213] *ὡς τῶν ὄχλων ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ἐκείνῳ συνερχομένων καὶ τὰς καρποφορίας προσφερόντων*: ibid. 130 (pp. 122–3).

[214] Ibid. 223 (pp. 193–4). [215] See e.g. Escolan 1999; Caner 2002; Rapp 2005, pp. 108–11.

[216] Escolan 1999, pp. 307–9. He claims that Anastasios, an Antiochene *scholastikos* who was extremely rude about Symeon, was treated less harshly by the saint than the aforementioned clergy who criticized him. In fact, Anastasios dropped dead in a public portico in Antioch after receiving an angry message from the saint (*Life of Symeon* 224 [pp. 194–6]); this was actually more severe than the punishments suffered by any of the clerics (one of the guilty clergymen, Thomas, did die, but only after repenting and being forgiven by Symeon: ibid. 116 [p. 95]).

[217] I have been unable to consult Wipszycka 2021 by the time of submitting this manuscript, but her study will offer important new insights into the relationship between holy men and the ecclesiastical hierarchy; one section deals with Symeon the Younger.

Not only does the hagiographer emphasize Symeon's close relationship with several bishops of Antioch, Seleucia, and Constantinople, but, as Susan Ashbrook Harvey has shown brilliantly, his focus on liturgy serves to show Symeon's integration into the Church: 'ultimately, liturgy transfigured the ascetic body of the stylite into the ecclesial body of the church.'[218] The picture given by the *Life* is thus complex: on the one hand, it seems to reflect the growing closeness of the monastic and ecclesiastical worlds by the sixth century, as monasteries came increasingly under episcopal control while, at the same time, the Church was ever more influenced by ascetic and monastic ideals; on the other, it suggests that this process had not caused rivalries to disappear, at least at a local level.[219] Indeed, if the stylite did enjoy a strong relationship with Antiochene bishops, this could have heightened tensions between him and lower-level clerics, as the latter saw Symeon's popularity threatening their standing not only among the wider population but also with their own ecclesiastical superiors.

Most of the criticisms levelled at Symeon in the *Life* do not relate to any identifiable rivalries, but rather seem to reflect a widespread religious scepticism, largely among Christians, about his claims to holiness. In particular, his ability to perform miracles is frequently doubted: one man from Daphne was reluctant to take his daughter to Symeon to be cured, as he was 'held by a profound incredulity'; a bald man, Babylas, initially refused to use a *eulogia* given to him by Symeon to grow his hair, 'not believing this to be possible'; and the 'masters' of a priest who had experienced many of Symeon's miracles mocked them.[220] Other opponents accepted that miracles took place but denied that they were divine: a Cilician brick-maker asked a potential supplicant of the saint, 'Why do you delude yourselves, going to an imposter who makes it his business to do that kind of thing to people through magic tricks?'.[221] Antony Kaldellis has argued persuasively that these kinds of doubts and queries, which are fairly common in hagiography, do not simply represent generic clichés; rather, they must be a response to real scepticism among the broader Christian society (even if the particular incidents are not literally true).[222] Indeed, it is demonstrably true that

[218] See esp. *Life of Symeon* 25 (pp. 21–2), 34 (p. 33), 71 (pp. 60–2), 134 (pp. 126–7), 204 (pp. 177–8), 202–3 (pp. 176–7), 205 (p. 178); Harvey 1998, p. 538. See also, for an argument that the architecture at the 'Wonderful Mountain' gave Symeon a special place in the liturgy, Belgin-Henry 2018.

[219] On the increasing institutionalization of monasticism (a process in which the Council of Chalcedon represented a watershed), see e.g. Dagron 1970, p. 276; Caner 2002, esp. pp. 235–47. The process of monastic institutionalisation continued in the sixth century: see e.g. on Justinian's actions Hatlie 2007, esp. pp. 45–57. On the uptake of ascetic ideals in ecclesiastical and episcopal circles, see esp. Sterk 2004, passim.

[220] *ἀπιστίᾳ πολλῇ κατεχόμενος*: *Life of Symeon* 193 (p. 171); *μὴ πιστεύσας … εἶναι τοῦτο δυνατόν*: ibid. 194 (p. 172); 231 (p. 208).

[221] *τί πλανᾶσθε πρὸς ἄνδρα ἀπερχόμενοι ἐπιθέτην καὶ διὰ φαρμακίας τὰ τοιαῦτα ποιεῖν εἰς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐπιτηδεύοντα*: ibid. 234 (p. 211).

[222] Kaldellis 2014b, esp. p. 462. On Christian scepticism and hostility towards holy men, see also Dagron 1992; Dal Santo 2011a and 2012, esp. pp. 149–236; Sarris 2011c.

ordinary Christian believers sometimes struggled to accept holy men's claims to miracle-working powers, often in the face of their failures to perform.[223]

Yet Symeon faced far greater doubts and hostility than many holy men, because of the devastations suffered by northern Syria in the sixth century. The significance of the disasters to Symeon's reputation is shown by the careful attention paid to them in the *Life*: even if the proportion of the text dealing with them directly is relatively small, the accounts constitute some of the text's most elaborate chapters.[224] The hagiographer combines precise detail about the scope and effects of the disasters with highly emotive and religiously charged language reminiscent of apocalyptic literature. This combination is illustrated, for example, by chapters 104–7 of the *Life*, which probably deal with the severe series of earthquakes of late 557.[225] The hagiographer narrates in detail Symeon's predictions of the disaster and his efforts to negotiate with God to mitigate its results, his composition of three *troparia* for his monks and visitors to chant, his mother's fear, and the series of earthquakes itself. The account has apocalyptic and eschatological overtones throughout.[226] Thus the narrative of events is frequently interrupted by Symeon's visions: he sees, for example, the heavens open (with a phrase recalling the book of Revelation), the heavenly powers in two ranks with bowed heads, and above them a throne, raised in the air with no supports, and Christ sitting on it, full of anger.[227] Later, he sees an aerial boat containing 'angels of wrath', which is steered by the Holy Spirit against the coast.[228] He predicts to his brethren that if they cannot appease God's anger, 'stone will not remain on stone', recalling Jesus's words in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark about the destruction of the Temple, which lead into his discourse about the end times.[229] Yet despite these apocalyptic overtones, the hagiographer takes care to describe the extent of the earthquake with some precision. Thus he narrates, of the first quake:

> The next day, at about the tenth hour, the whole earth was shaken by a great earthquake, the like of which none among the many past generations could remember, and cities and villages of the coast fell down, as in the vision he

[223] This is evident not only from hagiography, but also from genres such as letters which could target scepticism still more directly: see e.g. below pp. 221–2, on the letters of Barsanouphios and John of Gaza.

[224] See esp. *Life of Symeon* 78 (pp. 66–8), 104–7 (pp. 81–8) (on earthquakes); 57–64 (pp. 50–6) (on the Persian invasion of 540); 69–70 (pp. 59–60), 124–9 (pp. 106–22) (on the plague).

[225] The hagiographer describes one of the earthquakes as devastating Rhegium, near Constantinople; an earthquake damaging Rhegium is attested by Agathias in 557: Agathias, *Histories* 5.3.9 (p. 167). See Pétridès 1902, pp. 272–3.

[226] See Van den Ven 1962–70, II, p. 104 n. 3.

[227] *εἶδε τοὺς οὐρανοὺς ἀνεῳγότας*; *Life of Symeon* 104 (pp. 82–3, quote at p. 82); Revelation 19:11: *εἶδον τὸν οὐρανὸν ἠνεῳγμένον*.

[228] *ἄγγελοι ὀργῆς*: *Life of Symeon* 104 (p. 83).

[229] *οὐ καταλειφθήσεται λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον*: ibid. 104 (p. 82); compare Matthew 24:2/Mark 13:2: *οὐ μὴ ἀφεθῇ ὧδε λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον ὃς οὐ καταλυθήσεται*.

> [Symeon] had seen .... But in the northern region, from Laodicea to Antioch, everything remained upright; only certain towers in the wall and church walls were broken, but there was no collapse, as the saint predicted, and the region from Tyre to Jerusalem too, as well as the southern region, was preserved equally, just as had appeared to Symeon in his vision.[230]

Subsequently, Symeon foresees that another quake will strike parts of Constantinople and its surroundings; the hagiographer is equally precise about the results of this, recounting that it caused much destruction in Constantinople, Nicomedia, Rhegium, parts of Nicaea, and other towns in Illyria.[231] It is important to bear this element of precision in mind, because it suggests that the hagiographer is not exaggerating the scale of the crises he recounts for any special purpose (for example, for didactic reasons, to stress the need for the people to repent). Rather, as the previously quoted passages make clear, far from overplaying the effects of the earthquake, Symeon's hagiographer stresses their limitations, in order to show that Symeon's prayers had some moderating influence. The true scale of the disasters posed, in fact, a severe problem for both hagiographer and saint, as it called into question the efficacy of Symeon's intercessory powers.

Theodicy and the Problem of Intercession

The *Life* reveals that the catastrophes afflicting Antioch and its surroundings led to challenges to Christian belief and in particular to Christian theodicy.[232] Thus, for instance, it tells us that Evagrios Scholastikos entertained blasphemous thoughts when the plague killed his own children but spared those of a pagan neighbour, a story confirmed by Evagrios himself.[233] More generally, the *Life* reports that there were some 'impious men of the city of Antioch' who denied mortal sin, the Last Judgement, and the final resurrection, and some of whom, significantly, 'judged that the movement of the stars was the cause of the

[230] *Τῇ δὲ ἑξῆς περὶ ὥραν δεκάτην τῆς ἡμέρας ἐσείσθη πᾶσα ἡ γῆ σεισμῷ μεγάλῳ, οἷον οὐδὲ αἱ παρελθοῦσαι πολλαὶ γενεαὶ ἀπεμνημόνευον γενέσθαι, καὶ ἔπεσαν πόλεις καὶ χῶραι τῆς παράλου κατὰ τὴν ὀφθεῖσαν αὐτῷ θεωρίαν.... Ἀπὸ μέντοι Λαοδικείας κατὰ Ἀντιόχειαν ἐπὶ τὸ βόρειον κλίτος ἔστησαν πάντα, μόνον πύργων τινῶν τοῦ τείχους καὶ τοίχων τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν διαρραγέντων· πτῶσις δὲ οὐ γέγονε κατὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ ἁγίου, καὶ τὰ ἀπὸ Τύρου δὲ ἐπὶ τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα καὶ τὸ μεσημβρινὸν κλίτος διεφυλάχθη ὡσαύτως κατὰ τὸ εἶδος τῆς θεωρίας αὐτοῦ*: *Life of Symeon* 105 (p. 85).

[231] Ibid. 106 (pp. 85–7). The reference to 'Illyria' here is, however, difficult to explain: the province of Illyria/Illyricum was in the western Balkans, whereas the particular towns cited are all to the east of Constantinople.

[232] On the ideological effects of the disasters in Antioch, see Meier 2003, esp. pp. 313–19 (on the Persian sack) and pp. 345–57 (on the fire and earthquakes of 526–8). On the effects of the sixth-century disasters across the empire on faith in holy men, see ibid. esp. pp. 354–5, 415–21, 543–5, 554–6; Dal Santo 2011a, esp. p. 133, 2012, pp. 323–4. On responses to earthquakes, see Dagron 1981, pp. 87–103.

[233] *Life of Symeon* 233 (pp. 210–11); Evagrios Scholastikos, 6.23 (p. 239).

earthquakes which were happening'.[234] Here, deviant explanations of the earthquakes are linked to doubts concerning Symeon's miracles: these impious men, hearing about the saint's miracles, challenged him in debate.[235] Another episode conveys the impression still more strongly that the saint's hagiographer felt divergent explanations of the earthquakes to be a direct threat to Symeon's authority: Symeon foresees an earthquake and prays for pardon from the Saviour, but the earthquake strikes nonetheless, whereupon 'some of those who are pagans and waste their labour in the deceit that is astrology said that the city would certainly be destroyed'.[236] The stylite, however, proved them wrong: praying again, he managed to stop the earthquake and proclaimed, 'It is ended, the futile error of the calculators who brashly claim to know the will of God by guessing at events'.[237] The hagiographer thus portrays the saint as claiming the end of the earthquake as proof of his interpretation of events, and of his intercessory powers, against rivals who implicitly or explicitly denied his authority and relevance.

The threat posed by such disasters to Symeon's authority is further shown by the confused, and sometimes unorthodox, ways in which the hagiographer attempts to justify the saint's failure to prevent the devastation. In particular, the *Life*'s presentation of Symeon's conversations with God is highly revealing: in times of crisis, the two frequently come into conflict. Déroche has noted examples from various hagiographies of the author presenting his saint as being unwilling to follow God's will: for instance, (the deceased) Demetrios of Thessalonike refused to leave his city to plague, although ordered to do so by angels; Symeon the Younger rebuked the heavenly saints for failing to answer his prayer to resurrect his disciple Konon. Déroche is surely right to see behind this the problem of reconciling the saint's role as obedient performer of divine commands with his equally important role as intercessor for his supplicants; yet his argument is less convincing in trying to associate this dilemma with a specific form of hagiography, miracle-collections, on the grounds that their compilers struggled to unify accounts from different sources.[238] It is more probable that the real difficulty was a more basic one, applicable to any hagiographer: how to reconcile high expectations of a holy man with a sometimes disappointing reality. Thus, instances of tension between Symeon and God proliferate in the context of the earthquakes and plagues affecting Antioch, suggesting that the hagiographer is attempting, with limited success, to explain Symeon's inability to prevent the

[234] *ἀσεβεῖς ἄνδρες τῆς πόλεως Ἀντιοχείας*: *Life of Symeon* 157 (p. 138); *τὴν τῶν ἄστρων κίνησιν αἰτίαν ἐδόξαζον γίνεσθαι τῶν συμβαινόντων σεισμῶν*: ibid. 157 (p. 138).

[235] Ibid. 157 (pp. 138–9).

[236] *ἔλεγόν τινες τῶν ἑλληνιζόντων καὶ ἐν τῇ τῆς ἀστρολογίας πλάνῃ ματαιοπονούντων ὅτι πάντως ἀπόλλυται ἡ πόλις*: ibid. 78 (p. 67).

[237] *πέπαυται γὰρ ἡ τῶν ψηφιστῶν περίεργος πλάνη στοχασμῷ τῶν συμβαινόντων βουλὴν Θεοῦ γινώσκειν ἀπαυθαδιαζομένων*: ibid. 78 (p. 67).

[238] Déroche 2000, pp. 145–55.

disasters. Normally, Symeon is presented as a direct channel and 'vessel' of God's will: the elder John states that 'he is a great and venerable vessel of God's choice', and John the Baptist tells Martha that she must guard him carefully 'as a holy vessel', a phrase which recurs when the brothers carry him to his new pillar.[239]

In times of crisis, however, the link between Symeon and God is much less direct. On one occasion, God ignores Symeon's prayer: Symeon asked God if he would spare Antioch from a Persian attack, 'and there was no explanation from the Lord, because the anger of his wrath was full'.[240] At other times, God or his messengers question Symeon's attempts to intercede: once when Symeon prays for relief from plague, God replies that the people's sins are manifold, and asks why Symeon is upset, since he loves them no more than God himself does.[241] On another occasion, Symeon is distraught at the destruction he has foreseen, and a troop of angels ask him, 'What are you so concerned about? Who will tell the Antiochenes this? They speak hostilely about you, and do you fight on their behalf?'.[242] The hagiographer thus attempts to move responsibility for the disasters from Symeon to divine will and the Antiochenes' sins, by showing that he has made great efforts to intercede and change God's mind.

Yet this is no simple solution to his difficulty, as it fails to deal with the problem of why good people fall victim to disasters. The hagiographer thus has to face a doubly challenging situation: not only does he have to prove that Symeon's loyalty to his supplicants is unwavering, and effective, but he also has to handle the thorny question of theodicy. In short: he cannot show Symeon accepting God's apparently indiscriminate punishment of the Antiochenes (as this would be to betray his dependants), but equally he cannot, while remaining in orthodoxy, suggest that God was acting wrongly. In his efforts to handle these competing pressures, the hagiographer tries to portray Symeon as following in the footsteps of Old Testament figures of unquestionable orthodoxy: Abraham and Job. But the extremity of the situation in Antioch forces him to make subtle changes to his models, which have profound consequences for the question of theodicy and the role of the holy man.

When describing the devastating earthquakes of 557, the hagiographer draws on the Old Testament story of Abraham interceding for Sodom. In the biblical passage (Genesis 18:16–33) God decides that he will not conceal his plans from Abraham, and tells the patriarch that he will destroy Sodom and Gomorrah if what he has heard about their sinfulness is true. Abraham, however, questions him, asking if he will really destroy Sodom if he discovers that there are even fifty

[239] *μέγα καὶ τίμιον σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐστιν*: *Life of Symeon* 36 (p. 36); *ὡς σκεῦος ἅγιον*: ibid. 3 (p. 5), 113 (p. 93).

[240] *καὶ οὐκ ἦν δήλωσις παρὰ Κυρίου, ὅτι ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ θυμοῦ αὐτοῦ πλήρης*: ibid. 57 (p. 51).

[241] Ibid. 69 (pp. 59–60).

[242] *τί ὅτι μέλει σοι οὕτως*; *Τίς ἐρεῖ ταῦτα τοῖς Ἀντιοχεῦσιν*; *Αὐτοὶ λέγουσιν ἐναντία περὶ σοῦ καὶ σὺ ἀγωνίζῃ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν*; ibid. 104 (p. 82).

righteous people there, and suggesting that this would be immoral: 'By no means will you do anything like this thing, to slay the righteous with the impious, and the righteous will be like the impious! By no means! Shall not you, the one who judges all the earth, do what is just?'[243] God promises that if he finds fifty righteous people he will not destroy the city; Abraham then haggles, lowering the number of the just required to save Sodom first to forty-five, then to forty, then thirty, then twenty, and finally to ten; God agrees that he will not destroy the city in any of these situations. In the event, God does destroy the city, after saving the righteous Lot and his daughters. Even this biblical narrative in its original form posed challenges to early Christian commentators: either Abraham was right to intervene, and God was in danger of acting unjustly (which would, of course, be very problematic theologically), or the patriarch's protestation was unnecessary, which would somewhat undermine Abraham's own authority. John Chrysostom, in his forty-second homily on Genesis, opts for the latter option, without entirely solving the problem:

> So when the angels went off to Sodom, as I remarked before, the patriarch stood before the Lord. 'Abraham approached him', the text goes on, 'and said, "Surely you won't destroy the righteous along with the impious, so that the righteous will be as the impious?"' O, what bold speech on the just man's part—or, rather, his great compassion of spirit, stupefied as he was by the intoxication of sympathy and not knowing what he was saying. To show that he made this plea in great fear and trembling, Sacred Scripture says, 'Abraham approached him and said, "Surely you won't destroy the righteous along with the impious?"' What are you doing, blessed patriarch? Does the Lord require entreaty from you not to do this? No, let us not think that. You see, he doesn't say it to the Lord as if he were about to do it; instead, since he wasn't bold enough to speak directly on his nephew's [i.e. Lot's] behalf, he made a general entreaty for everyone out of a desire to save his life along with theirs and rescue them along with him.[244]

Chrysostom explains away Abraham's words (which he clearly found somewhat problematic), telling his audience that he was 'stupefied by the intoxication of

[243] Genesis 18:25 (Translation: R. J. V. Hiebert, for *NETS*; I have made minor changes to the translation).

[244] *Οἱ μὲν οὖν ἄγγελοι, καθάπερ ἔφθην εἰπὼν, ἀπῆλθον εἰς τὰ Σόδομα· ὁ δὲ πατριάρχης εἱστήκει ἐναντίον Κυρίου. Καὶ ἐγγίσας, φησὶν, Ἀβραὰμ εἶπε· Μὴ συναπολέσῃς δίκαιον μετὰ ἀσεβοῦς, καὶ ἔσται ὁ δίκαιος ὡς ὁ ἀσεβής; Ὢ τῆς τοῦ δικαίου παῤῥησίας, μᾶλλον δὲ, ὦ ψυχῆς συμπάθεια· ὅπως τῇ τῆς συμπαθείας μέθῃ καρωθεὶς οὐδὲ ὅ λέγει συνίησι. Καὶ δεικνύουσα ἡ Θεία Γραφὴ, ὅτι μετὰ φόβου πολλοῦ καὶ τρόμου τὴν ἱκεσίαν ποιεῖται, φησίν· Ἐγγίσας Ἀβραὰμ εἶπε· Μὴ συναπολέσῃς δίκαιον μετὰ ἀσεβοῦς; Τί ποιεῖς, ὦ μακάριε πατριάρχα; Τῆς παρὰ σοῦ δεῖται παρακλήσεως ὁ Δεσπότης, ὥστε μὴ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι; Ἀλλὰ μὴ τοῦτο νοήσωμεν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ὡς τοῦ Δεσπότου τοῦτο ποιεῖν μέλλοντος λέγει, ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ ἐξ εὐθείας διὰ τὸν ἀδελφιδοῦν εἰπεῖν οὐκ ἐθάῤῥει, κοινὴν ὑπὲρ ἁπάντων ποιεῖται τὴν ἱκεσίαν, βουλόμενος μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων καὶ τοῦτον διασῶσαι, καὶ μετὰ τούτου καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἐξαρπάσαι*: John Chrysostom, *42nd Homily on Genesis* 4 (col. 390, trans. pp. 426–7 [I have made minor changes to the translation]).

sympathy and didn't know what he was saying': he was so worried about his nephew Lot that he made a quite unnecessary plea to God. The preacher makes it clear that God would never have destroyed the righteous with the ungodly: 'Does the Lord require entreaty from you not to do this?'. His interpretation of the passage is, therefore, dependent on the claim that God did not destroy anyone just in his punishment; he saved the virtuous Lot, and only condemned the other, sinful, men of Sodom. He thus manages to avoid any suggestion that God could act unjustly, even if at the price of suggesting that Abraham was not entirely in control of himself.

What we find in the *Life of Symeon* is more startling. At the beginning of his account of the earthquake of 557, the hagiographer tells us that God 'looked and saw the whole earth corrupted . . . . And he did not hide anything from his servant'; this last phrase recalls God's decision in Genesis 18:17 not to conceal his intentions from Abraham.[245] Symeon then receives various warnings of the destruction that was going to take place before having a vision of Christ seated on an aerial throne. Symeon finds himself in front of the throne, and says to Christ:

> Hear me Lord, the God of me your servant, and have mercy and don't carry out the word of your anger, but be reconciled through your love for mankind. On the first Friday when you ordered that Antioch be overthrown, were there not thirty righteous men in her, and didn't you destroy them with the impious? But don't now act on that basis; you who judge the whole earth, don't destroy the righteous with the impious.[246]

This passage is clearly based upon the Genesis passage just discussed and indeed has strong verbal parallels with it.[247] Yet whereas Abraham's speech is entirely directed towards the future, urging God not to destroy the righteous with the impious—and John Chrysostom is therefore able to defend God by stating that, of course, he would never act in this unjust way—Symeon, according to his hagiographer, told Christ that he had *already* destroyed the righteous with the impious, on a previous occasion when Antioch had been overthrown; he simply asks him not to repeat this distressing action.[248] The hagiographer thus comes very close to

[245] *Κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον ἐπέβλεψε ὁ Κύριος καὶ εἶδε πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν κατεφθαρμένην . . . καὶ οὐκ ἀπέκρυψεν οὐδὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ δούλου αὐτοῦ*: *Life of Symeon* 104 (p. 81); compare Gen. 18:17: *ὁ δὲ Κύριος εἶπεν· οὐ μὴ κρύψω ἐγὼ ἀπὸ Αβραὰμ τοῦ παιδός μου, ἃ ἐγὼ ποιῶ*. Cf. also *Life of Symeon* 57 (p. 51, lines 22–3).

[246] *Ἄκουσόν μου, Κύριε ὁ Θεός μου τοῦ δούλου σου, καὶ σπλαγχνίσθητι καὶ μὴ ποιήσῃς κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς ὀργῆς σου, ἀλλὰ τῇ σῇ φιλανθρωπίᾳ διαλλάγηθι. Ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ παρασκευῇ ὅτε ἐκέλευσας στραφῆναι Ἀντιόχειαν, οὐκ ἦσαν ἐν αὐτῇ τριάκοντα δίκαιοι καὶ ἀπώλεσας αὐτοὺς μετὰ τῶν ἀσεβῶν; ἀλλὰ νῦν μὴ ποιήσῃς κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο· ὁ κρίνων πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν, μὴ ἀπολέσῃς δίκαιον μετὰ ἀσεβοῦς*: ibid. 104 (p. 83).

[247] e.g. compare the *Life*'s '*μὴ ἀπολέσῃς δίκαιον μετὰ ἀσεβοῦς*' to Genesis 18:23, '*Μὴ συναπολέσῃς δίκαιον μετὰ ἀσεβοῦς*'.

[248] It is not clear to which of the previous catastrophes recounted in the *Life* this refers.

making Symeon reproach God for having behaved immorally in the past, a reproach charged with potentially subversive implications. This is not to suggest that the hagiographer was consciously trying to imply that God had acted unjustly; this is most unlikely. Rather, the extremities of the situation in Antioch, and the almost impossible task of having to balance Symeon's duty to the Antiochenes with his loyalty to God, forced him into this awkward and in some ways destabilizing parallel with Abraham. Although the hagiographer tries to claim this episode as a triumph for Symeon, as he successfully persuaded God to spare Antioch from the earthquake's worst effects and it caused greater destruction elsewhere, his presentation of events implicitly acknowledges that Symeon is unable to prevent the earthquake fully and had previously failed to prevent Antioch from being 'overthrown', thus exposing the vulnerability of the saint's problematic position as mediator.

Yet earthquakes in nearby cities were not the biggest challenge faced by Symeon. While the *Life* certainly does suggest that he was deemed to have a responsibility to protect neighbouring areas, the centre of his authority and therefore of his protective sphere was his own monastery. A passage in the *Life of Martha* shows clearly that Symeon's powers were supposed to keep his monks safe, unless they acted sinfully: one of the monks fell ill after extinguishing the lamp on Martha's tomb, 'and so since the grace given to the holy man did not allow anything bad to befall any of them unless one of his commands was disobeyed, the brother naturally asked what he had done wrong'.[249] His powers were thus particularly vulnerable to scepticism and criticism if his monastery was afflicted by disaster.

This seems to have happened, during his lifetime, in the form of an outbreak of the plague. Antony Kaldellis has shown that sixth-century writers, in the absence of a shared, coherent, and emotionally satisfying theological explanation for disasters, often wrote about outbreaks of plague in confused and contradictory ways.[250] He does not consider Symeon the Younger's Life, except in relation to Evagrios's response to his children's death, yet the text certainly confirms his thesis.[251] The hagiographer, striving to justify how Symeon's own disciples could fall victim to the plague, develops an elaborate account modelled on the book of Job, according to which the outbreak of the plague is part of Satan's plan, with God's permission, to test Symeon. Yet even though this approach might seem to have the potential to deal with the problem in a sophisticated and satisfying manner, again we see that the hagiographer's concerns to defend the saint at all costs lead him to make alterations to his biblical model and into inconsistencies.

[249] *Ἐπειδὴ οὖν ἡ δεδωρημένη τῷ ἁγίῳ χάρις ἐκτὸς παραβάσεως ἐντολῆς αὐτοῦ οὐδὲν συνεχώρει κακὸν ἐπελθεῖν τινι αὐτῶν, εἰκότως ἠρώτα ὁ ἀδελφὸς τί ἔτυχεν ἡμαρτηκώς*: *Life of Martha* 43 (p. 285).

[250] Kaldellis 2007b, pp. 1–19. For the more general difficulties faced by early Christian theologians in responding coherently to disasters, see Young 1973, pp. 113–16.

[251] Kaldellis 2007b, pp. 12–13; for Evagrios, see above p. 151; *Life of Symeon* 233 (pp. 210–11); Evagrios Scholastikos, 6.23 (p. 239).

Job was an icon and role model for many early Christian monks, viewed as the perfect example of how to endure suffering with patience.[252] Job is thus frequently cited in hagiography, particularly in reference to ailments endured by holy men: to take but a few examples, Theodore of Sykeon 'was thought to be a new Job because of his great suffering'; John the Almsgiver was described as a new Job after his wealth was lost at sea (but later replaced twofold); Symeon Stylites the Elder is repeatedly compared to Job, as, for example, when Satan apparently received permission from God to smite the stylite with a worm-filled infection in his foot.[253] Yet these comparisons are, by and large, brief and relatively straightforward: they are used to show how the saints in question endured personal misfortunes. The account in the *Life of Symeon the Younger* is much longer, more complex, and more morally problematic, as the saint experiences illness not in his own body, but in those of his dependent disciples. In order to demonstrate the complexities and problems of the hagiographer's narration, it is necessary to summarize the relevant section of the *Life*.[254]

It begins immediately after the account of the brothers' uprising against Symeon led by Angoulas, discussed above. Symeon summons his monks and tells them to endure the tests they have to face; he then reads and explains the book of Job to them. He reports that Satan has acquired a power against them and against young children, but that he himself has gained the power to resist him, and he narrates a vision he had seen of the Devil outside the gates of heaven. The hagiographer then recounts a conversation between the Devil and God: the Devil is ordered by God to attack children and good men, whereupon he retorts that he will start with Symeon. God refuses, saying that He protects Symeon; the Devil is angered, saying that it is easy for Symeon to be pious since God has always favoured him. He then asks Him to let him excite disobedient men against Symeon and to turn his disciples into men-demons.[255] God gives him permission, 'to reveal the steadfastness of His servant all the more through such a trial'.[256] The Holy Spirit reassures Symeon that God had not given Satan power against the stylite himself, but that He 'had given permission to this alone, that he should wrestle with him by putting his brethren to the test'.[257] After this, we are told, Satan swoops down to Symeon's column and threatens him, telling him that he will make the people and his disciples cause him intolerable troubles. Symeon drives Satan away. While leaving, the Devil touches Symeon's beard and all the hairs fall out, but the saint prays to God, who makes the beard reappear.

[252] See Caseau-Chevallier 2005, pp. 93–5; Brakke 2006, pp. 45–7.

[253] *νέος Ἰὼβ ἐνομίζετο εἶναι διὰ τὴν τοιαύτην ἀλγηδόνα*: George of Sykeon, *Life of Theodore of Sykeon* 20 (p. 17); Leontios of Neapolis, *Life of John the Almsgiver* 28–9 (pp. 380–1); Syriac *Life of Symeon* (p. 577); Antonios, *Life of Symeon* 7 (p. 26), 17–18 (pp. 42–6).

[254] *Life of Symeon* 124–9 (pp. 106–22).

[255] See above p. 143.

[256] *πρὸς τὸ δοκιμώτερον διὰ τοῦ τοιούτου πειρασμοῦ φανῆναι τὸν αὐτοῦ θεράποντα*: *Life of Symeon* 124 (p. 110).

[257] *τοῦτο δὲ μόνον συνεχώρησεν, ὥστε παλαῖσαι αὐτὸν μετ' αὐτοῦ διὰ τοῦ πειρασμοῦ τῶν ἀδελφῶν αὐτοῦ*: ibid. 124 (p. 110).

At this point, the narrative becomes confused.[258] The hagiographer refers, very briefly, to disturbances caused by the Devil, recounting that he stirred up trouble among the brothers, hardened the hearts of the people who came to the monastery, and made the leaders of neighbouring towns angry with the saint, but that all this was to no avail, because pagans and barbarians and heretics all converted to God, and:

> the masses too, whose hearts had been hardened for a little while, returned again to their former conviction. From then on the brothers' thoughts also calmed down after their previous disturbance, and the leaders of the surrounding towns desisted from their untimely unrest and were very peacefully and lovingly disposed towards the saint as before.[259]

This would seem to be the fulfilment of Satan's pact with God, yet, at this point, after peace has apparently been restored, the hagiographer narrates, 'after this drew near the time of trials which the Devil had sought and received from the Lord, to smite first children and good men and to wrestle with the servant of God through the brethren'.[260] The Devil spreads his wings over the northeastern part of Antioch and causes great lamentation there among children and many men. This appears to be a euphemistic way of referring to the plague, given that later passages make it clear the discussion refers to an illness.[261] Supplicants from Antioch, and Symeon's mother Martha, beg him to protect Antioch; at dawn on Sunday Symeon prays to God and sees himself in a vision over the affected part of the city, 'and although he completed his prayer for that place, he did not receive authority to pray for the whole city'; the hagiographer thus has to acknowlege limitations on the saint's capacities.[262] The Devil then moved to the southern part of the city and caused further great grieving there. On the next Saturday (the intervening week is passed over swiftly) Martha again urges Symeon to pray for the bane/plague (*πληγήν*) to be removed. On Sunday Symeon sees himself in the southwest of Antioch, from where the Devil is trying to attack the whole town. Symeon prevents him from doing this but the Devil retorts that he will target his monks instead. Soon the Devil attempts to attack the monastery; Symeon resists, and the Devil is ordered by God to leave, for the moment, and strike a different region.

[258] Cf. Van den Ven 1962–70, II, p. 136 n. 126.

[259] *οἱ πρὸς μικρὸν σκληρυνθέντες λαοὶ πρὸς τὴν προτέραν αὖθις πληροφορίαν ἐπανήρχοντο. Ἐγαληνίουν δὲ λοιπὸν καὶ οἱ τῶν ἀδελφῶν λογισμοὶ ἐκ τῆς προγενομένης αὐτοῖς ταραχῆς, καὶ οἱ ἡγούμενοι δὲ τῶν κύκλῳ πόλεων παυσάμενοι τῆς ἀκαίρου κινήσεως εἰρήνην πολλὴν καὶ ἀγάπην εἶχον πρὸς τὸν ἅγιον καθὰ καὶ πρότερον*: *Life of Symeon* 125 (p. 112).

[260] *Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ἤγγικεν ὁ καιρὸς τῶν πειρασμῶν οὓς ἐξῃτήσατο ὁ διάβολος παρὰ τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ ἔλαβεν, ὥστε πατάξαι πρῶτον τὰ παιδία καὶ τοὺς καλοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ παλαῖσαι ἐν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μετὰ τοῦ δούλου τοῦ Θεοῦ*: ibid. 126 (p. 112).

[261] On the hagiographer's 'metaphorical' terminology for the plague, see Stathakopoulos 2004, p. 308.

[262] *ἐπιτελέσας τὴν εὐχὴν ὑπὲρ τοῦ τόπου ἐκείνου οὐκ ἔλαβεν ἐξουσίαν δεηθῆναι ὑπὲρ πάσης τῆς πόλεως*: *Life of Symeon* 126 (p. 113).

On Sunday, however, Symeon calls the brothers together and tells them that the trials are imminent, urging them to resist evil. The Devil tells Symeon that he will strike the first blow against 'the one who always obeys me, Angoulas'; Symeon reports this to the brothers; Angoulas retorts rudely and immediately falls severely ill.[263] After this, we are told, 'in the same way, almost in one moment, the destroyer rushed against all the brothers, and all were struck with the same death-bringing sickness; some of the more negligent among them even died'.[264] Then one of the monks, Konon, 'whom the saint loved greatly for his zealousness', dies of the same illness; Symeon, distraught at this, calls upon God and the heavenly powers to resurrect him.[265] When he is initially unsuccessful in his requests, he appears to grow angry with his heavenly intercessors (including Mary, John the Baptist, and the angels and archangels), asking if they have forgotten their love for him and saying that if Konon is not resurrected all his efforts have been in vain. The brothers present become terrified, seeing heaven looking angered.[266] Symeon prays again, and finally the Lord appears to him (in a vision laden with apocalyptic overtones); He inquires into the situation and resurrects Konon.[267] The account ends with a statement that these troubles happened to the brothers because of their failure to obey Symeon properly, despite his efforts to encourage the weaker monks to act better.

The general tenor of the account is somewhat incoherent and contradictory, both on a structural and narratological level and on an interpretative one. In terms of the shape of the narrative, it is far from clear what the relationship is supposed to be between the two different sets of Satanic attacks which are described: the first being when Satan makes the monks, visitors, and neighbours of the saint hostile to Symeon (which the hagiographer refers to very briefly, providing no explanation or detail of this hostility), and the second, recounted in much more detail, when he smites both Antioch and the monastery with plague. As narrated, the two episodes seem to follow on from each other chronologically, with little to no link between them. But the introductory part of this section, when Satan negotiates with God to gain power against Symeon, does not speak of him making two separate attacks on the saint, but of one. This introductory section undoubtedly refers to the plague, as it speaks of Satan being sent against children, who are later named as among the primary victims of the plague in Antioch.[268] Yet it also speaks of the Devil turning Symeon's monks into men-demons, which must be a reference to the outbreak of

[263] *τοῦ ὑπακούοντός μου ἀεὶ Ἀγγουλά*: ibid. 128 (p. 116).

[264] *Ὡσαύτως δὲ ἐν μιᾷ σχεδὸν ὥρᾳ κατὰ πάντων τῶν ἀδελφῶν ὥρμησεν ὁ ὀλοθρεύων, καὶ πάντες τῷ ὁμοίῳ κατεσχέθησαν πάθει θανατηφόρῳ· ἐξ ὧν τινες τῶν ἀμελεστέρων καὶ ἐτελεύτησαν*: ibid. 128 (p. 116).

[265] *ὃν πάνυ ἠγάπα ὁ ἅγιος ὡς πάνυ σπουδαῖον*: ibid. 129 (p. 116).

[266] Ibid. 129 (p. 118).

[267] On this important episode, see Déroche 2000, pp. 153–4; Meier 2003, pp. 416–17, and below pp. 205–6.

[268] *Life of Symeon* 124, lines 59, 78–9 (pp. 108–9); 126, lines 3, 9–10 (pp. 112–13).

widespread hostility to the saint.[269] Two interpretations are possible. Either the hagiographer is conflating two separate episodes of trouble faced by Symeon, and tries to deal with them both through the typology of Job, or in fact the scepticism targeted at the saint and the outbreak of the plague are linked. By this latter reading, the brief reference at the end of chapter 125 to the outbreak of hostility to the saint and its swift conclusion might in fact anticipate and summarise the subsequent more extensive narrative about the spread of the illness itself; the outbreak of plague could have caused this widespread scepticism and criticism.

Still more fundamentally, the narrative is also confused at an interpretative level. On the one hand, the hagiographer uses the typology of Job to explain the events. This is signalled quite explicitly, since Symeon reads the book of Job to his monks to prepare them for the crisis. When he recounts his vision of Satan to the monks, he states that it was 'just as what was read to you in the book of Job signified'.[270] The conversation described between Satan and God, in which the former gains the power to test Symeon through other men, is closely modelled on the opening passages of the book of Job, in which God gives Satan the permission to test Job to prove that he is a truly pious servant of God, but denies him, initially, power to afflict Job himself.[271] The hagiographer somewhat adapts the story of Job, since in the Bible, when Satan's attacks on Job's animals, servants, and children fail, he does then gain permission from God to afflict Job directly with sickness, although not with death.[272] This second stage of trials does not happen to Symeon; the hagiographer's focus remains on the sufferings of the brethren and the Antiochenes. At one level, this use of the story of Job is a very effective way of justifying the outbreak of plague at Symeon's monastery, as it suggests that far from being the fault of the saint or his monks, it is in fact a product of Symeon's great virtue: the Devil yearns to prove that the apparently perfect man can be shaken from piety by distress. The hostility of the brothers is presented as a product, not a cause, of the Devil's attacks: 'I will enter into his disciples and turn them savage, into a species of men-demons.'[273] This explanatory schema could even explain why good monks such as Konon could fall victim to the plague, since the illness was a byproduct of Satan's hostility to Symeon rather than the result of sinfulness.

Yet at the same time there is a decidedly different interpretative current running through the hagiographer's narrative, one that presents the troubles as the punishment for the monks' disobedience to the saint, and suggests that the plague served to reform and improve the monastery, in part by removing the most wicked of its monks. The news that Satan was about to strike the monastery is said

[269] Ibid. 124, lines 106–7 (p. 110).
[270] *ὥσπερ τὰ ἐν τῷ Ἰὼβ προαναγνωσθέντα ὑμῖν ἐσήμανεν*: ibid. 124 (p. 108).
[271] Job 1:6–12. [272] Job 2:1–6.
[273] *εἰσελεύσομαι εἰς τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκθηριώσω αὐτοὺς ἐν γένει δαιμόνων καὶ ἀνθρώπων*: *Life of Symeon* 124 (p. 110).

to have induced a change of heart among the monks: 'and behold the monastery, weeping and repenting, was whitened and grew young again.'[274] The idea of the regeneration of the sinful monastery emerges still more clearly through the hagiographer's use of a horticultural image: the saint, he reports, positioned the brethren before him 'like a very extended vine, its branches waving in fruits of justice. And since the time had come to prune the vine, so that it would bear more fruit and they would become truly his disciples', he told them that the tests were imminent.[275] This image implies the monastery was being purged, violently, of damaging and disruptive elements. The pre-existence of sinfulness among the brethren is referred to explicitly when the plague actually strikes the monastery: not only does Satan first attack the wicked Angoulas but, as mentioned above, the hagiographer claims that some of the 'more negligent' brothers died from the illness. This is evidently a return to the concept of disease as punishment for sin, even though the hagiographer immediately goes on to describe the impressively zealous monk Konon falling ill with the same sickness. The clearest expression of this interpretative scheme comes in the final lines of the account: 'All this happened to the brothers because of their negligence and contempt which they displayed for the commands of the just man [Symeon], who tried to support those who were left remaining not to be careless any longer, but rather to obey his words enthusiastically.'[276]

This explanatory approach is incompatible with the Job typology outlined above: in the one, the plague is the product of Satan's God-sanctioned testing of the virtuous Symeon and his monks; in the other, in contrast, it is created by the same monks' sinfulness. The hagiographer thus responds inconsistently and rather incoherently to what was, perhaps, the biggest challenge of Symeon's career. Constrained by events, he has to admit limitations on the saint's capacities—thus he notes that Symeon did not obtain the power to protect the entirety of Antioch from the plague—but tries to deploy various competing explanatory arguments to show, first and foremost, that the stylite himself could not be blamed for what had taken place. Indeed, the only common strand between his two interpretative systems is that, in both, the guilt is placed firmly elsewhere: in the Job-typology, on Satan and his envy of Symeon, and in the punishment-for-sins model, on the disobedience of the monks. For the hagiographer, needing to counteract the scepticism faced by the holy man in the light of these disasters, the pressure to absolve him of all blame was a much higher priority than forming an internally consistent interpretation of what had taken place.

[274] *ἰδοὺ ἡ μονὴ κλαίουσα καὶ μετανοοῦσα καὶ ἐλευκαίνετο καὶ ἐνέαζεν*: *Life of Symeon* 127 (p. 114).

[275] *ὡς ἄμπελον ἐκτεταμένην σφόδρα καὶ κομῶσαν τοῖς κλάδοις ἐν καρποῖς δικαιοσύνης. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ παρέστη ὁ καιρὸς τῆς καθαιρέσεως τῆς ἀμπέλου, ἵνα καρπὸν πλείονα ἐνέγκῃ καὶ ἀληθῶς γένωνται αὐτοῦ μαθηταί*: ibid. 127 (p. 115).

[276] *Ταῦτα δὲ πάντα συνέβαινε τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς διὰ τὴν ὀλιγωρίαν αὐτῶν καὶ καταφρόνησιν ἣν ἐπεδείκνυντο περὶ τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ δικαίου ὑποστηρίζοντος τοὺς ὑπολειφθέντας μηκέτι ἀμελεῖν, ἀλλὰ προθύμως ὑπακούειν τῶν λεγομένων ὑπ᾽ αὐτοῦ*: ibid. 129 (p. 122).

Scapegoats: The Pagan Rich

Symeon's hagiographer thus uses a variety of biblical typologies and interpretative strategies in his attempts to explain why Antioch and its neighbouring regions faced disaster despite the supplications of the saint. But these defensive and exculpatory measures were not the only tactic employed by the hagiographer in the face of growing scepticism induced by crisis. He also seems—quite possibly following in the footsteps of the saint himself—to have adopted a more aggressive approach, employing strong, potentially divisive rhetoric to separate and condemn the impious in society whose behaviour had supposedly provoked most of the disasters. In particular, the frequent references to paganism (sometimes paired with other forms of heterodoxy such as astrology and Manicheism) in the *Life* are highly significant. Pagans appear in varying contexts, most commonly as supplicants at Symeon's shrine; as secret pagans whom Symeon exposes; and, as we have seen, as those who advanced alternative, non-Christian, explanations for the disasters.[277] Once paganism is explicitly blamed for crisis: thus when Symeon discovers that God is planning to let the Persians sack Antioch, and prays to ask him to change his mind, God retorts:

> Lo, the cry of its inhabitants has risen to me, and the time is at hand for its retribution for the lawless acts which they perform, setting up a table and libations and sacrifices to the demons, using the Fortune [Tyche] of the city as a pretext and thereby provoking my jealousy. Because of this I will give them over to a witless race.[278]

The hagiographer here makes supposed idolaters in Antioch the scapegoats for the Persian invasion; their pagan activities, although apparently intended to protect the city, have irremediably angered God.

What, however, should we make of these references to paganism? Déroche argues that they do not show that paganism had survived well into the sixth century; instead 'pagan' in the *Life* means only a Christian who was superstitious, or sceptical about Symeon.[279] He may go too far in rejecting the idea of sixth-century Byzantine paganism: as discussed in Chapter 1, pagans are certainly

[277] Pagan supplicants at Symeon's shrine: ibid. 141 (pp. 130–1), 143 (p. 131), 188 (pp. 166–7). Secret pagans exposed: ibid. 221 (pp. 190–2), 223 (pp. 193–4). Heterodox explanations for disasters: ibid. 78 (pp. 66–8), 157 (pp. 138–9).

[278] *Ἰδοὺ ἡ κραυγὴ τῶν κατοικούντων ἐν αὐτῇ ἀνέβη ἐνώπιόν μου καὶ καιρὸς ἀνταποδόσεως αὐτῆς ἐπέστη διὰ τὰς ἀνομίας ἃς πράττουσιν, τιθέντες τράπεζαν καὶ σπονδὰς καὶ θυσίαν τοῖς δαιμονίοις, προφάσει τύχης τῆς πόλεως καὶ παραζηλοῦντές με ἐπὶ τούτοις· διὰ τοῦτο παραδώσω αὐτοὺς ἔθνει ἀσυνέτῳ*: ibid. 57 (p. 50). The hagiographer invokes another biblical model here, recalling the words of God reported by Moses in his song: Deuteronomy 32:21.

[279] Déroche 1996, pp. 76–8. His argument is reacting against Van den Ven's literal understanding of the references to pagans in the *Life*: see Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 163*.

referred to in a wide range of sources from this period, and sometimes, as Peter Bell notes, in ways which suggest that 'their existence is taken completely for granted'.[280] Thus, while it is unlikely that we will ever be able to prove how common paganism really was at this time, there is no reason to dismiss out of hand the idea that Symeon and his hagiographer might have encountered 'real' pagans in and around sixth-century Antioch. Nonetheless, as has been seen, it is clear that references to 'pagans' could be used to fulfil a range of polemical and political purposes which were not necessarily related to the realities of pagan survivals. In particular, imperially sponsored purges of 'pagans' seem to have targeted dissident or potentially dissident members of traditional elites, who had a strong cultural connection to the classical past and were thus vulnerable to such charges.

Accusations of 'paganism' thus often had implications that were not only religious but social and political. It is particularly important to bear in mind this social dimension of allegations of paganism when examining the *Life of Symeon*, for here too we find an association drawn between pagans and the wealthy. The *Life* is, in general, unusually hostile to the Antiochene upper classes. As noted above, it was not uncommon for hagiographers, particularly those writing in the fifth century, to include stories which portray their heroes as defenders of the poor from the cruel behaviour of the rich.[281] Most of these stories, however, are offset by others in which virtuous nobles who show their devotion to the holy man (usually by giving him gifts and patronage) are treated by him with respect, often benefiting from his miraculous powers.[282] Their purpose thus appears didactic: to encourage the wealthy to emulate the examples of the virtuous nobles, in order to receive the same rewards. Symeon's Life stands out, as it contains almost no episodes which depict the local secular elites in a positive light (although there are a small number of neutral/positive references to nobles in Constantinople).[283] Several stories describe scepticism about Symeon and his powers on the part of notables from Antioch and its surroundings, including an unnamed *magistrianos*, the 'masters' (δεσπόται) of a priest from the village of Basileia, and Anastasios, a *scholastikos* and friend of two *illoustrioi*, Asterios and Thomas Veredaronas.[284] Anastasios's association with secular elite culture is signified by the fact that

[280] Bell 2013, p. 240. See above pp. 38–9.

[281] See above p. 109; for some examples see Kallinikos, *Life of Hypatios* 21 (pp. 134–40), 44.8–19 (pp. 262–4); Syriac *Life of Symeon* (pp. 581–3, 585–8); *Life of Alexander Akoimetos* 34 (pp. 684–5), 39 (pp. 688–9); *Life of Marcellus Akoimetos* 32 (pp. 314–16).

[282] The relatively short fifth-/early sixth-century *Life of Alexander Akoimetos* stands out as another Life which contains few positive stories about the rich.

[283] *Life of Symeon* 151 (pp. 135–6), 232 (pp. 208–10).

[284] Ibid. 144 (pp. 131–2), 231 (p. 208), 224 (pp. 194–6). Two *scholastikoi* (lawyers) do appear in the work who are presented positively—John and Evagrios. Both, however, were closely associated with the Church: John subsequently became patriarch of Constantinople, while Evagrios worked for the patriarch Gregory. For Symeon's hagiographer, their allegiance to the Church seems to exempt them from his general hostility to the local elites.

Symeon's messenger finds him when he has just bathed and is sitting 'in one of the notable spots of the city, in the so-called Diphotos, near the winter bath'; he also subsequently dies in 'the public portico'.[285] Babylas, a man from a village near Antioch, whom Symeon cures of baldness, is interrogated about his cure by 'many of the most important men of the city and their followers who had previously mocked him contemptuously'.[286]

Most strikingly, the *Life* suggests that many of the notables of Antioch were secret pagans. Symeon exposes the demon-worship of an individual noble: we are told that 'one of the notables of the aforementioned city of Antioch' came to take communion during a celebration at the monastery but was rebuffed by Symeon, who eventually turned to him and exposed his hidden wickedness, accusing him of constantly blaspheming Christ and threatening him that a demon would hang him in the air until he confessed his sins.[287] The notable, in terror, 'started recounting his lawless actions, his blasphemies towards God, the numerous sacrifices which he offered in secret to the demons, and other abominable things which we judge best to pass over in silence, to spare the ears of simple people'.[288] This crypto-pagan does not appear as an isolated example but as characteristic of a wider trend among the Antiochene nobility. This is made clear during the most explicitly political part of the *Life*, that conveying Symeon's support for the imperial agent Amantios. After 'some of the unbelievers', who wanted to insult Symeon 'because he had often exposed the false belief and error of those practising paganism among them', tried to destroy an icon of him, the saint asked God to send a man to expose the impious.[289] Importantly, in this imprecation he links the idolatry of the sceptics to their wealth, asking God to send His agent 'to make an example of all the beliefs that they hold because they put their faith not in you, but in their great wealth. This is why their reason has been corrupted into practises of idolatry, the fact that they considered gold to be their God.'[290]

Symeon then related a vision to his monks: 'a formidable commander/official will come and expose the impiety and low practices of the atheists.'[291] Within a few month this officer, Amantios, came to Antioch, employing such harsh tactics

[285] *ἔν τινι τῶν ἐπισήμων τόπων τῆς πόλεως ἐν τῇ λεγομένῃ Διφώτῳ πλησίον τοῦ χειμερινοῦ δημοσίου*: ibid. 224 (p. 195); *τὸν δημόσιον ἔμβολον*: ibid. 224 (p. 196).

[286] *πολλοὶ τῶν πρώτων τῆς πόλεως καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτοῖς τὸ πρότερον ἐν ἐξουδενώσει διαγελῶντες αὐτόν*: ibid. 197 (p. 175).

[287] *Ἀνήρ τις τῶν ἐπισήμων τῆς εἰρημένης Ἀντιοχέων πόλεως*: ibid. 221 (p. 190).

[288] *ἀρξάμενος ἀφηγεῖτο τὰς ἀνόμους αὐτοῦ πράξεις καὶ τὰς εἰς Θεὸν βλασφημίας καὶ πολλὰς θυσίας ἃς κρυπτῶς ἐπετέλει τοῖς δαίμοσιν, καὶ ἕτερά τινα μυσαρά, ἅπερ σιωπῇ παραδραμεῖν καλὸν εἶναι νενομίκαμεν, φειδόμενοι τῆς τῶν ἁπλουστέρων ἀκοῆς*: ibid. 221 (p. 191).

[289] *τινες τῶν ἀπίστων . . . ὡς πολλάκις ἐλέγξαντα τὴν κακοπιστίαν καὶ πλάνην τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἑλληνιζόντων*: ibid. 158 (p. 140).

[290] *παραδειγματίζοντα πάντα ἅπερ αὐτοὶ φρονοῦσι μὴ ἠλπικότες ἐπὶ σοί, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῷ πλήθει τοῦ πλούτου αὐτῶν, ὅθεν καὶ διεφθάρη τὰ νοήματα αὐτῶν ἐν ἐπιτηδεύμασιν εἰδωλολατρείας, τὸν χρυσὸν θεὸν αὐτῶν ὑπάρχειν ἡγουμένων*: ibid. 160 (p. 142).

[291] *φοβερὸς ἄρχων ἐλεύσεται καὶ τὰς ἀσεβείας καὶ φαυλοπραγίας τῶν ἀθέων διελέγξει*: ibid. 160 (p. 143).

that 'even those whose way of life was blameless feared his coming'.[292] Amantios, upon investigating Antioch, '*found most of the leading men of the city* and many of its inhabitants possessed by Hellenism [i.e. paganism] and Manichaeism and astrology and automatism and other ill-omened heresies' [emphasis mine].[293] The *Life* continues to describe the diverse punishments, including, significantly, heavy fines, which Amantios inflicted on the heretics: 'their wealth was used up in numerous fines.'[294] The account is laced with strong religious symbolism: Symeon saw Amantios in a vision with the river Jordan following him, the paradise of God, and a wild beast paraded in procession, representing the discovery of the truth and the punishment and mockery of the idolaters;[295] he later saw, in a vision of the tribunal, stars emerging from the darkness of night.[296] The hagiographer thus portrays Amantios as an instrument of God's will, and the fulfilment of Symeon's prayer for the chastisement of the heretics.

Amantios, however, may have been a controversial figure, and was certainly associated with controversial policies. The chronicle of John Malalas contains the only other known contemporary reference to him, describing him, as governor of the east, punishing those involved in the Samaritan revolt of 555/6: 'he hanged some, beheaded others or cut off their right hands, and confiscated others' property. There was great fear in the city of Caesarea and the eastern regions.'[297] It is possible that his purge in Antioch, attested only in the *Life of Symeon*, may have followed on from his actions in Palestine.[298] As discussed above, although Symeon's hagiographer claims that the sole target of the purge was heterodoxy, the reality may well have been more complex: the *Life* also refers to Symeon saving from execution a *δημότης* (common man/factional partisan) imprisoned by Amantios who had caused 'many disturbances during popular/factional [*δημοτικαῖς*] disorders'.[299] Whether this refers simply to popular unrest, or more specifically to conflict between the circus factions, it certainly suggests that the targets of the purge may have been guilty of social and political as much as religious crimes. In any case, the descriptions of Amantios's confiscations of property in Malalas, and of his imposition of fines in the *Life of Symeon*, recall hostile accounts of Justinian's purges by authors including Prokopios and Evagrios Scholastikos, who claimed that the accusations of heterodoxy and misdemeanours were invented to enable the emperor to accumulate as much wealth as possible; thus for instance Evagrios wrote 'many, indeed innumerable, men of

[292] *καὶ τοὺς ἐν ἀμέμπτῳ πολιτείᾳ δεδιέναι τὴν παρουσίαν αὐτοῦ*: ibid. 161 (p. 143).

[293] *ηὗρε τοὺς πλείους τῶν πρώτων τῆς πόλεως καὶ πολλοῦς τῶν κατοικούντων αὐτὴν ἑλληνισμῷ καὶ μανιχαϊσμῷ καὶ ἀστρολογίαις καὶ αὐτοματισμῷ καὶ ἄλλαις δυσωνύμοις αἱρέσεσι κατεχομένους*: ibid. 161 (p. 144).

[294] *ὁ πλοῦτος αὐτῶν ἐν πολλαῖς ζημίαις κατηναλώθη*: ibid. 161 (p. 144).

[295] Ibid. 160 (pp. 142–3).

[296] Ibid. 164 (pp. 145–6).

[297] John Malalas 18.119 (p. 417, trans. pp. 294–5).

[298] See *PLRE* 3a, 'Amantius 2', pp. 52–4.

[299] *στάσεις . . . πολλὰς ἐν ταῖς δημοτικαῖς ταραχαῖς*: *Life of Symeon* 164 (p. 146).

substantial property [Justinian] deprived of all their possessions, painting on excuses without excuse'.[300]

All this suggests that persecutions like that described in Symeon's Life were highly controversial, and that by supporting one of their leaders, Amantios, Symeon's hagiographer was aligning himself with a particular political faction. Yet, as we have seen, he does not always favour Justinian, and indeed downplays his role in the appointment of Amantios.[301] He does not seem, therefore, to be straightforwardly promoting imperial propaganda; instead, he thought that supporting Amantios's persecutions lay in Symeon's best interests. Just as Justinian may have launched persecutions to deflect the idea that earthquakes and defeat in war were a punishment for a wicked emperor, so too Symeon is shown supporting his efforts, as well as launching his own, smaller scale, persecutions by punishing sceptics, to deflect attention from his own impotence to the impieties of others.[302]

There is a strong social dynamic to this scapegoating in the *Life of Symeon*. The hagiographer emphasized that the wealthy elites of Antioch were disproportionately represented among the pagans detected by Amantios; he even claimed that it was the worship of gold that led to their idolatry. This may, in part, reflect reality; as noted above, purges elsewhere in the empire seem to have targeted the rich. Yet, given the other indications already discussed of the hagiographer's hostility towards the upper echelons of local society, it is almost certain that he consciously emphasized the guilt of the rich. Crucially, this does not seem to be an innovation by the hagiographer, but rather to reflect the saint's own rhetoric, since Symeon himself in his sermons evinces considerable hostility towards the wealthy and draws a very similar connection to that found in the *Life* between riches and paganism.[303] Why, then, do Symeon and his hagiographer target the rich in this way? It is quite possible that, as mentioned above, the lifestyles of the Antiochene notables made them vulnerable to such attacks: continuities from pre-Christian culture in art, education, and lifestyle could easily be perceived and condemned as 'pagan'.[304] Some of Symeon's comments in his sermons certainly suggest that this was the case, as when he addresses a hypothetical rich man, telling him that his luxurious lifestyle made him like a pagan 'even if you are called a Christian'.[305] This is a strong statement, effectively narrowing the boundaries of Christianity to include only those who met the saint's very high standards. Such comments

[300] Evagrios Scholastikos 4.30 (p. 179, trans. p. 232). For this theme in Prokopios, see e.g. *Secret History* 6.20 (p. 41), 8.9 (p. 51), 8.31 (p. 55), 11 (pp. 70–7), 12.1–13 (pp. 77–9), 13.2 (p. 84), 13.4–8 (p. 85), 13.22 (p. 87), 19.1–12 (pp. 120–2). On the possible social/political context for these complaints, see Sarris 2006, esp. pp. 200–27.

[301] See above pp. 124–5.

[302] For the idea that Justinian's wickedness caused the eastern empire's disasters, see Prokopios, *Secret History* 18.36–45 (pp. 118–19). The troubles caused to Justinian's authority by disasters, and his attempts to rebut these, are a major theme throughout Meier 2003. For Symeon's punishment of sceptics, see *Life of Symeon* 224–5 (pp. 194–7).

[303] See above pp. 98–110.

[304] See above pp. 38–9, 43–5.

[305] *εἰ γὰρ καὶ χριστιανὸς εἶ λεγόμενος*: sermon 8.10 (p. 35).

support Robin Lane Fox's argument that the holy man tended to function less as a 'mediator' than as a 'commander', insisting on strict rules; in Symeon's case his rhetoric became even more stark due to the serious problems facing him.[306]

Chiara Cremonesi has argued that the hagiographer's claims that in his youth Symeon refused to drink from his mother's left breast, or even her right when she had been eating sacrifical meat, was part of a broader rhetoric of separation, asserting an unbreachable divide between pagan and Christian in order to unite Christians together in a time of difficulty.[307] Her argument about the imagery of the rejected breast is powerful, but it seems likely that the rhetoric was intended not to unite all Christians, but to condemn and ostracize Symeon's critics, and thereby defend the saint himself. In the face of adversity, the stylite adopted an aggressive and divisive strategy that attempted to impose strict binary definitions on an Antiochene society which was in practice more culturally, religiously, and socially fluid. The saint and his defenders may also have exploited pre-existing social friction. As discussed in Chapter 1, Antioch in this period shared with many other cities in the ancient world the potential for conflict between its wealthy and poorer classes, conflict which was sometimes submerged but often came to the fore in times of crisis.[308] By playing on such tensions by trying to condemn Antioch's wealthy elite as unbelievers who were responsible for the disasters which were afflicting the city, the stylite's supporters could hope to unite the rest of society behind the saint, to shore up his support, and to deflect attention from the failings of his own intercessory powers. They used a harsh, black and white rhetoric, to scapegoat certain 'heterodox' elements in society for disasters that affected almost everybody. In a sense, they seem to have been playing out in microcosm in Antioch what Justinian was enacting throughout the empire, without necessarily being conscious or approving of the wider imperial programme. Far from acting to unify society, therefore, the saint appears as a divisive and politicized figure, fighting for his reputation in a climate of uncertainty.

Conclusion

The *Life of Symeon Stylites the Younger* shows the importance of situating hagiography in its precise historical context. It is a complicated text, containing unexpected silences and unusual interpretations, which can only be understood against the background of sixth-century Antiochene history and society. It has a complex attitude towards important figures of the period, passing over some in silence, treating emperors with reserve, while adopting a generally positive attitude towards local bishops, with the exception of Domninos. It is not, contrary to some earlier

[306] Lane Fox 1997, p. 213.
[307] Cremonesi 2008, pp. 255–64.
[308] See above pp. 33–8.

interpretations, preoccupied with the ongoing struggle between Chalcedonians and miaphysite factions. Rather, it seems concerned with local Antiochene events and with defending Symeon's reputation from critics.

In particular, the invasion, earthquakes, and outbreaks of plague experienced by the city and its neighbourhood necessitated a response from the saint's supporters. The disasters damaged Symeon's claims to be able to mediate between man and God, provoked increased scepticism and hostility towards the saint, and thereby drove his hagiographer, perhaps following in the stylite's own footsteps, into aggressive and potentially divisive rhetoric and politics. The author of the *Life*, torn between presenting Symeon as the direct vessel of God's will, and as a bold and powerful defender of his supplicants, is forced into conflicting and sometimes uncomfortable explanations of events. As well as drawing on complex biblical typologies, the hagiographer also provides scapegoats for disasters, targeting the supposedly pagan upper classes of Antioch, and going so far as to support the controversial Justinianic persecutions.

One more feature of the text may also serve an apologetic purpose: its unusual length and the vast quantity of miracle stories related within it. Miracle stories could serve an apologetic function: thus Robert Doran has argued that the non-chronological version of the Syriac *Life of Symeon Stylites the Elder*, preserved in a manuscript at the Vatican, was structured, purposefully, so that the vast majority of the miracles are related before the hagiographer deals directly with the controversial question of Symeon's ascent onto a column.[309] This structure, Doran suggests, is intended to ensure that the reader has accepted Symeon's holiness before he is confronted with his novel form of asceticism: 'the very order of the account is thus perhaps also an apology for stylitism.'[310] The *Life of Symeon Stylites the Younger* is not structured in this way, but its accumulation of miracle stories may serve a similar function. By embedding his accounts of the most controversial events of the stylite's career within extremely lengthy records of his miracles, the hagiographer almost overwhelms the reader with proofs of his saint's sanctity: the stories of his failures, however dramatic, are vastly outnumbered. The *Life of Symeon the Younger* contains perhaps more miracles than any other late antique saint's life; this may be because its hero had to contend with more challenges than almost any other major saint. Unfortunately, we do not have the sources to assess the efficacy of the hagiographer's approach to dealing with these challenges. There is, however, an important text, probably dating from fairly shortly after the *Life of Symeon*, which does give some insight into how the saint's cult continued to evolve: the *Life of Martha*.

[309] Doran 1984. [310] Ibid. p. 47.

4
The Life of Martha

At some point after the death of Symeon the Younger, a new saint was created for his shrine, although one whose connection to the stylite could hardly have been stronger: his mother, Martha.[1] The record of her veneration is preserved in her hagiographic Life, which has been little discussed in modern scholarship.[2] This work, edited but not translated by Van den Ven towards the end of his edition and translation of the *Life of Symeon*, was seemingly also written by one of the monks of Symeon's monastery.[3] Van den Ven expressed a negative (and doubtless accurate) view of the work's historical reliability, commenting, 's'il existe des faits réels au fond de ce roman historique, de caractère très artificiel, il est impossible de les découvrir'.[4] Nonetheless, as evidence for the development of a cult, as a literary composition containing a distinctive vision of piety, and as the Life of a holy woman who was neither a martyr nor a nun, the text possesses considerable historical interest.

Unfortunately, there is no secure evidence to provide a precise dating for the *Life*. Van den Ven has shown that, although it contains some strange inconsistencies in chronology when compared to the *Life of Symeon*, its author undoubtedly knew of the latter work (probably, as suggested above, dating from the late sixth or early seventh century).[5] The earliest manuscript containing the whole *Life of Martha* dates from the tenth/eleventh century, but there is a late ninth-century manuscript containing a part of the text, leaving a window of approximately two and a half centuries in which the work could have been produced.[6] Van den Ven has argued that it most probably dates from the seventh century, and is not much later than the Life of the stylite himself, since its style and language are very similar to that of the longer Life, as is its picture of the community on the 'Wonderful Mountain'; he notes too that its author understands the meaning of obscure phrases such as '*καμασίνη μηλωτή*' (the covering which sheltered Symeon on his column) which were misunderstood by later adapters of Symeon's Life.[7]

[1] A version of this chapter has been published in the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*: Parker 2016.
[2] Martha's Life has recently been briefly discussed in Boero and Kuper 2020, pp. 401–5.
[3] Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 78*. [4] Ibid. p. 92*. [5] Ibid. pp. 89*–90*.
[6] Ibid. pp. 67*–78*. The *Life of Martha* has survived in four manuscripts, all of which transmit almost identical versions of the text. All four also contain the *Life of Symeon* (which also survives in several manuscripts that do not contain Martha's Life). For detailed description of the manuscripts, see ibid. pp. 12*–19*.
[7] Ibid. p. 78*.

Symeon Stylites the Younger and Late Antique Antioch: From Hagiography to History. Lucy Parker, Oxford University Press.
 DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780192865175.003.0005

Details fit a seventh-century date of composition and there are no obvious anachronisms. To give an example, one visitor is described as taking from Symeon's monastery 'the clay tokens moulded from his image'.[8] Archaeological evidence suggests that the shrine on the 'Wonderful Mountain' produced clay tokens in the sixth and seventh centuries, but lead tokens in the middle Byzantine period.[9] The *Life* also refers to opponents of Symeon in his lifetime and appears keen to avert criticism of his decision to build an oratory for himself and Martha, which seems most likely to have been a contentious issue relatively close to his life.[10] It thus appears probable that the *Life* dates from the early seventh century; certainly, as we will see, many of its themes resonate with other works of that period, and it contains nothing to suggest that it was written after the Arab conquests. Charles Kuper and Dina Boero have recently argued, on the basis of the text's interest in Jerusalem and the relic of the True Cross, that the hagiographer was writing in the period 614–29/30 and that the *Life* was 'composed in response to the theft of the True Cross by the Sasanians [in 614]'.[11] This link to the Persian sack of Jerusalem is not certain, but a date in this period is plausible, and would situate the composition of the text at a time of high tension in the Middle East.

The *Life of Martha* is very unusual in both subject matter and structure. Although several late antique saints' Lives feature the holy men's mothers as pious auxiliary characters, the *Life of Martha* is unique in taking as its central figure the mother of a famous holy man. Nor does the work have the clear narrative arch of a typical holy biography. To give a brief outline, the first ten chapters consist of an overview of Martha's pious *politeia* (way of life), with very little specific information about her life. Then, over twenty chapters (11–33) are devoted to an extended account of her death, from a series of premonitory visions until her initial burial in Daphne and subsequent reburial on the 'Wonderful Mountain'. The next ten chapters (34–44) recount her posthumous healing miracles, and are followed by six chapters (45–51) relating to the building of a new oratory, and the translation of Martha's body to this shrine. The final lengthy section (52–70), perhaps the most isolated part of the *Life*, consists of a series of visions, miracles, and letter exchanges relating to Symeon's acquisition of a relic of the True Cross from Jerusalem for his monastery; Martha is noticeably less present in this part of the text. The *Life* finishes with the report of two more healing miracles and a conventional conclusion, stressing her continued performance of miracles and intercession with Christ (71–3). It is possible that it was not originally conceived as a whole; in particular, the awkwardly phrased transition into the section describing Symeon's acquisition of a relic of the True Cross, as

[8] *Τὰς ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἐκτετυπωμένας ἐκ τῆς εἰκόνος αὐτοῦ σφραγῖδας*: *Life of Martha* 54 (p. 298).
[9] For the different types of tokens, see Lafontaine-Dosogne 1967, pp. 146–7; Vikan 1984, pp. 73–4.
[10] See below pp. 172–8, 180. [11] Boero and Kuper 2020, pp. 402, 404–5.

well as the different tone of this section from the rest of the *Life*, suggests that it may have been added after the original account of Martha's life and miracles.[12] On the other hand, as we will see, certain themes do run throughout the entire work.

It is worth noting from the outset that the unusual features of the work are not explained by Martha's gender.[13] Three dominant 'models' of female holiness have been identified within late antique hagiography, none of which are applicable to Martha: the 'harlot-saint', the 'patrician philanthropist', and 'the cloistered nun'.[14] This concept of three 'models' for female holiness may be too schematic, failing to appreciate the diversity of late antique hagiography.[15] Nonetheless, there are characteristics of many biographies of holy women which are noticeably absent from Martha's Life, including, most strikingly, an emphasis on the body, celibacy, and asceticism.[16] Apart from a solitary comment that Martha often fasted, especially on Wednesdays and Fridays, the author of Martha's Life makes no reference to Martha mortifying her body or shunning fine clothes and jewellery, despite these being dominant themes in much hagiography relating to women;[17] nor does he attempt to excuse her for not maintaining her virginity by stressing either her reluctance to marry or her later adoption of a celibate lifestyle.[18]

It has been argued that the Lives of women provided more powerfully than the biographies of holy men the hope of redemption for all humankind, since if a woman, a descendant of Eve, could overcome her inherently sinful body and become holy then so could anyone.[19] The *Life of Martha* does not fit into this pattern, given its lack of interest in its subject's body and sexuality. The hagiographer does, however, draw on some common late antique models of female sanctity, in particular the biblical humble, serving, and ministering women exemplified by Martha, sister of Lazarus, in the Gospel of Luke.[20] Her Life thus utilizes elements of the conventional portrayal of female holiness without being entirely

[12] *Life of Martha* 51 (pp. 295–6). [13] As I have argued in more detail in Parker 2016.

[14] Coon 1997, p. xxii; compare also Talbot 1998, p. 2.

[15] Constantinou has identified a wider range of 'roles' performed by female saints in hagiography; she focuses on six which she regards as particularly common, 'the martyr, the penitent, the cross-dresser, the nun, the abbess and the pious wife', but states that several others existed, including 'the virgin', 'the defender of images', and the 'mother of a saint' (Constantinou 2005, pp. 17–18). Yet given that, as she acknowledges, there are only one or two examples of these last three categories—the *Life of Martha* is the only example she finds of the 'mother of a saint'—I would question whether the term 'role', in this schematic sense, is useful here.

[16] For the prominent role of the body and associated themes in female hagiography, see, above all, Constantinou 2005: she argues that 'holy women achieve sanctity almost exclusively through their bodies' (p. 16).

[17] *Life of Martha* 2 (p. 254). See Coon 1997, pp. 31–41.

[18] The *Life of Symeon* takes a more conventional approach, claiming that Martha was very reluctant to marry but eventually yielded to marriage because of the need to obey her parents' wishes and because of divine instruction: *Life of Symeon* 1 (p. 3).

[19] Harvey 1990, pp. 45–6; Coon 1997, pp. xvii, 77, 94.

[20] See Coon 1997, pp. 41–4. Martha is compared to the biblical Martha explicitly in *Life of Martha* 10 (pp. 260–1); ministration is also a prominent theme in 4–5 (pp. 256–7) and 7–8 (pp. 258–9). Her humility is emphasized at *Life of Martha* 10 (pp. 260–1) and 1 (p. 254).

conventional, strongly emphasizing Martha's devoted care for the religious and for the poor at the expense of discussing her asceticism and chastity. This stress on her ministration, and in particular her ministration to the priests and monks of Symeon's monastery, is at the heart of the text, as we shall see.

In order to understand better the structure and contents of the *Life*, we need to consider its hagiographer's aims and ideals. At their most basic level, most saints' Lives were concerned with cult promotion, and the *Life of Martha* is no different. Indeed, it contains hints that Martha's cult was controversial and needed defending, which may reflect the highly unusual nature of Martha's position as a mother of a saint venerated in her own right. In contrast with the *Life of Symeon*, which only mentions Martha in passing and depicts her as pious but not holy, the *Life of Martha* depicts its female subject as a fount of miracles and ongoing source of healing. This is only one of several divergences in perspective from the *Life of Symeon*. Strikingly, the disasters and polemic which predominate in the *Life of Symeon* play a much more limited role in the Life of his mother. The scope of Martha's hagiography is much reduced, and the claims made about miracles are less ambitious. Whereas Symeon's hagiographer presented the stylite as a single, spectacular, beacon of holiness and salvation, Martha's hagiographer instead acknowledges a range of sources of sanctity and of routes to salvation. An emphasis on the salvific powers of the liturgy and of the sacraments runs throughout the text, and in many ways explains its distinctive structure. The burden of salvation is moved away from the exceptional holy man towards the individual actions of supplicants and worshippers. The hagiographer thus displays a rather different set of priorities and interests from the author of the *Life of Symeon*, which may reflect a wider shift in ways of responding to the challenges facing saints' cults in the seventh century.

Cult Promotion and Apologetic

The need to venerate Martha's tomb and to participate in her liturgical commemorations, and the dangers of failure to do so, run as a leitmotif through her hagiographic *Life*. Several cautionary stories in the later parts of the text provide warnings of the negative consequences of the neglect of proper ritual duties. In one example, a certain Sergios son of Antoninos, from the village of Charandamas, fell prey to a severe fever because 'he refused to go near to any corpse, thinking it an abomination. Behaving in just the same way towards the relic of the blessed woman he did not go near it or put his shoulder underneath it.'[21] The connection between his refusal to honour Martha's corpse and the disease is stressed in his

[21] *Παρῃτεῖτο παντὶ νεκρῷ πλησιάσαι, βδελυκτὸν τοῦτο λογιζόμενος. Τοῦτο δὲ αὐτὸ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ λειψάνου τῆς ὁσίας πεποιηκὼς οὐ προσήγγισεν, οὐδὲ τὸν ὦμον ὑπέθηκεν*: *Life of Martha* 35 (p. 280).

later confession: 'I shunned handling the precious relic of the holy Symeon's mother and that is why these terrible judgements have befallen me.'[22] One of Symeon's monks fell severely ill because: 'he drew near to the precious coffin of the blessed woman to light the lamp, but, possessed by a scornful and disbelieving thought, he instead quenched it and went away grumbling, not recognizing that the fault was in himself.'[23]

In a third example, when Symeon's monks were neglecting the lamp on Martha's coffin, one of the remiss brothers, the monastery's manager, fell extremely ill. When he was on the brink of death, Martha appeared to him with a reproach: 'What were you all thinking when you didn't light my lamp? Do you not know that I am one who shares in the light of heaven and needs nothing of that kind, if not for the sake of your own salvation?'[24] This makes clear that ritual care for the saint was not intended to glorify the saint—who was already dwelling in glory—but to benefit the soul of the worshipper. The manager was cured after Martha brought the Eucharistic bread forward to his stomach, and thenceforth was diligent in lighting her lamp. These miracles where disease is caused by failure to carry out the appropriate rituals are clearly intended to emphasize the importance of attending to the saint's tomb, and the danger to both body and soul of failing to do so.

These reports of scepticism and neglect of Martha's veneration should not be dismissed as mere hagiographic *topoi*.[25] Her hagiographer seems to have had a specific apologetic goal in writing the *Life*. There are various hints in the *Life* that Martha's cult was a sensitive topic—possibly, though this is never stated explicitly, due to accusations that Symeon's encouragement of her cult was self-promoting or inappropriate due to their family connection—and that the performance of services in her honour might need justification. In one episode, we are told that Symeon refrained from ordering his disciples to attend to the lamp on Martha's coffin, out of fear that it would be thought that she was only revered because of his commands:

> For when the saint saw the brothers not bothering to light the lamp on her precious coffin, he did not command them to do this. This [he did], partly, so that it would not be thought by unbelieving people and those with weaker understanding that he himself was requiring and demanding the things done to honour her. But this [he did] also as a way of educating his brothers and

[22] *Ἀπεστράφην βαστάσαι τὸ τίμιον λείψανον τῆς μητρὸς τοῦ ἁγίου Συμεὼν καὶ διὰ τοῦτό μοι τὰ δεινὰ ταῦτα ἐπέστησαν κριτήρια*: ibid. 35 (p. 280).

[23] *Προσεγγίσας . . . τῇ τιμίᾳ σορῷ τῆς ὁσίας ἐπὶ τὸ ἅψαι τὴν κανδήλαν, περιφρονήσεως καὶ ἀπιστίας λογισμῷ κατασχεθεὶς ἔσβεσεν μᾶλλον καὶ μετὰ γογγυσμοῦ ἀνεχώρει, μὴ διακρίνας ἐν ἑαυτῷ πταῖσμα εἶναι τοῦτο*: ibid. 43 (p. 285).

[24] *Τί διαλογιζόμενοι οὐχ ἥψατέ μου κανδήλαν ἢ ἀγνοεῖτε ὅτι τοῦ ἐπουρανίου φωτός εἰμι κοινωνὸς ἐγὼ καὶ οὐ προσδέομαί τινος τῶν τοιούτων, εἰ μὴ διὰ τὴν ὑμῶν σωτηρίαν*; ibid. 39 (p. 283).

[25] On scepticism in saints' Lives, see above pp. 134, 149–50.

> wishing them to be taught through experience to offer the honours due to the saints willingly and not under compulsion.[26]

This implies that Symeon (or the hagiographer) was concerned that some people might think that he was forcing the promotion of her cult, perhaps for self-aggrandizing reasons. Similar fears are recounted in relation to Symeon's building of a new oratory for Martha's body. The *Life* claims that even after Martha had appeared to Symeon and the other brothers demanding the construction of a new oratory:

> The saint, although he had such an intention on the basis of revelation, held himself back cautiously at that time, and was not willing to embark on such a project, *both so that some more simple-minded, unfaithful people should not be put to the test, come up with foolish ideas and accuse the just man [Symeon] of illicit behaviour*, and also because he was planning to prepare a single house for himself and her, so that they would not be separated from one another even there, as in fact happened sometime later [emphasis mine].[27]

This reference to potential critics (denigrated as 'simple-minded' and 'unfaithful') of the saint's decision to build the shrine seems to reflect, again, fears that Symeon would be accused of self-aggrandizement by promoting his mother's cult. The whole extended sequence of visions and signs preceding the construction of the shrine should therefore be seen as an attempt to justify the decision to build the shrine, whether or not this in fact took place in the precise context described in the work.

It might seem surprising that a hagiographer writing in the seventh century, sometime after Symeon's death in 592, should be concerned about defending Symeon's decision to venerate his mother. It is important to remember here, however, that Martha's cult was unprecedented. I am not aware of any mothers of late antique ascetic holy men being venerated as saints in their own right.[28] Perhaps the closest parallel comes in the *Life of Alypios the Stylite*, whose mother

[26] *ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἑώρα τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ὁ ἅγιος καταφρονοῦντας καὶ μὴ ἅπτοντας τὴν ἐπὶ τῆς τιμίας αὐτῆς λάρνακος κανδήλαν, οὐκ ἐπέθετο αὐτοῖς τοῦτο ποιεῖν· τοῦτο μέν, ὡς ἂν μὴ νομισθείη ὑπὸ τῶν ἀπίστων καὶ ἀσθενεστέρους ἐχόντων λογισμοὺς αὐτὸς ἐπιτηδεύειν καὶ ἀπαιτεῖν τὰ πρὸς τιμὴν αὐτῆς· τοῦτο δέ, καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς παιδεύων καὶ διὰ τῆς πείρας διδαχθῆναι βουλόμενος ἑκουσίως καὶ οὐκ ἀναγκαστῶς προσαγαγεῖν τὰς ὀφειλομένας τιμὰς τοῖς ἁγίοις*: *Life of Martha* 39 (p. 282).

[27] *ὁ ἅγιος καίτοι πρόθεσιν ἐξ ἀποκαλύψεως ἔχων τοιαύτην ἐπεῖχεν ἑαυτὸν οἰκονομικῶς τὸ τηνικαῦτα καὶ οὐκ ἠθέλησεν ἀπάρξασθαι τοῦ τοιούτου ἔργου, τοῦτο μὲν διὰ τὸ μὴ πειρασθῆναί τινας τῶν ἁπλουστέρων καὶ ἀπίστων ματαίους ἀναπλάττοντας ἐν ἑαυτοῖς λογισμοὺς καὶ καταλαλοῦντας κατὰ τοῦ δικαίου ἀνομίαν, τοῦτο δὲ καὶ βουλευόμενος ἕνα οἶκον ἐπιτηδεῦσαι ἑαυτῷ τε καὶ αὐτῇ, ὥστε αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐν τούτῳ ἀχωρίστους ἀλλήλων εἶναι, ὅπερ καὶ γέγονε μετά τινας χρόνους*: ibid. 46 (p. 288).

[28] Peter Hatlie provides a useful summary of Byzantine texts dealing with what he calls 'ordinary mothers'; the only late antique hagiographies he identifies as treating this theme are those of Martha and Alypios: Hatlie 2009, p. 42.

is given a prominent role and depicted in very pious terms. She is not, however, shown as a miracle-worker, and it is quite likely that the hagiographer is in any case here drawing upon the story of Symeon and Martha.[29] Hagiographers typically paid little attention to their subjects' biological families after the initial description of their birth and departure from the family home. In the spirit of Christ's injunctions in the Gospels to eschew family ties, holy men are often shown distancing themselves from their families, if not completely rejecting them.[30] A particularly strict attitude appears in the Bohairic and Greek Lives of Pachomios, in which Pachomios's protégé, Theodore, is said to have refused to see his mother when she came to visit him at his monastery. In the Bohairic version, Theodore asks rhetorically:

> If I go out to meet her, will I not be found at fault before the Lord for having transgressed his commandment which is written in the Gospel? . . . I would not spare her even if it were necessary to kill her, just as the sons of Levi of old acted by an order the Lord gave them through Moses.[31]

In the Greek version of this episode, he is said to have added, 'I too, I have no mother, nor anything of the world, for it passes.' Pachomios approved of his harsh attitude, commenting, 'If you love God more than your mother, shall I prevent you? I shall rather encourage you. For, he who loves his father or his mother more than me is not worthy of me.'[32]

Other hagiographers were less harsh, but still emphasized a degree of distance from biological families. Symeon Stylites the Elder, the Younger's famous predecessor, was reportedly so strict in his prohibition of women from his enclosure that, according to one of his hagiographers, he even refused access to his own

[29] Charles Kuper has suggested that Alypios's hagiographer was inspired by the *Life of Martha*; Kuper has published a translation and discussion of the *Life of Alypios* in the Oxford Cult of Saints Database, Charles N. Kuper, Cult of Saints, E06497: http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.ptwhp?recid=E06497 (accessed 19 March 2021); idem, Cult of Saints, E07158: http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E07158. The *Life of Alypios* may well have been written after the *Life of Martha*, since Alypios himself only died during the reign of Heraclius (610–41). The *Life of Alypios* does seem to echo various stories associated with Symeon the Younger: for instance, Alypios's legs and knees are said to have worn away because of his ascetic practices (*Life of Alypios* 24 (pp. 166–7); compare *Life of Symeon* 31 (pp. 30–1)); and he gave his garment to a pauper (*Life of Alypios* 23 (pp. 165–5); compare *Life of Symeon* 77 (pp. 65–6)). Kuper's suggestion that the prominence attributed to Alypios's mother may reflect the Martha story thus seems plausible.

[30] Christ's injunction to his followers to separate from their families appears most notably at Luke 14:26, and, in a less harsh form, at Matthew 10:37–8. For a discussion of how early Christian authors interpreted these passages, see Jacobs 2003. For examples in hagiography, see for instance the sensitive discussion in Flusin 1983, pp. 94–7, of the theme of family and the separation therefrom in Cyril of Scythopolis's Lives of Euthymios and Sabas; the latter text has some stories emphasizing separation, but also allows Sabas to maintain a spiritual relationship with his mother.

[31] Bohairic *Life of Pachomios* 37 (p. 39, trans. pp. 60–1).

[32] First Greek *Life of Pachomios* 37 (pp. 22–3; trans. p. 323), with reference to Matthew 10:37; see Flusin 1983, p. 97 n. 58.

mother shortly before her death—although he did then bury her at the foot of his column.[33] Monastic leaders tended to encourage separation from biological families (although in practice monks often maintained family ties).[34] Strikingly, Martha's own hagiographer presents Symeon as someone who had transcended his earthly family: Martha, in her final speech to Symeon before her death, tells him that 'having sought His [God's] mercy, which is superior to lives [?], you have not recognized father and mother. For the creator is your father and mother and family, along with all the saints.'[35] This passage is highly paradoxical, delivered as part of a mother's farewell speech to her son. It is not surprising, therefore, that the veneration of an ascetic's mother as a saint in her own right, at that same ascetic's monastery, might prove controversial.

It is important to note here that the decision to promote Martha as a miracle-working saint seems to have been made consciously at some time after the death of her son: there is no suggestion in the *Life of Symeon* that his mother was herself worthy of reverence.[36] In the stylite's Life, Martha appears as a pious, and sometimes important, but occasional, character.[37] She is most active at the start of the *Life*, which describes her (reluctant) marriage to Symeon's father John, her success in converting John to a more pious way of life, her vision of John the Baptist proclaiming her imminent conception of a holy son, and her nurturing of Symeon until, at the age of six, he was led by a white-robed man to the monastic community in which he spent the rest of his life.[38] After this, her appearances in the *Life* are far less frequent, but nonetheless hint at her importance: both John, the head of the monastery joined by Symeon, and Ephraim, patriarch of Antioch, supposedly mentioned Martha on their deathbeds, while she is involved in some of the most dramatic episodes in the saint's adult life, including his response to a devastating earthquake, the procession celebrating his elevation to the column in the centre of the new complex on the 'Wonderful Mountain', and his resurrection

[33] Antonios, *Life of Symeon Stylites* 14 (pp. 36–9, trans. Doran pp. 92–3). Symeon is not hostile to his mother in the episode, but refuses to see her even though she is about to die, only communicating with her through messages; the hagiographer notes she only found him after not knowing where he was for twenty years. The contrast with Symeon the Younger and Martha is notable—although Lane Fox 1997, pp. 184–5, has suggested that Antonios may have been drawing on the legend of Martha in describing the burial of the Elder's mother at the foot of the column. Symeon the Elder's mother sometimes appeared in later artistic depictions of the stylite, which Lois Drewer has suggested may also have been inspired by the story of Martha: Drewer 1991–2, pp. 262–4.

[34] See esp. Schroeder 2020, ch. 8 (with further references).

[35] *Αὐτοῦ τὸ ἔλεος ἐξήτησας, τὸ κρεῖττον ὑπὲρ ζωὰς καὶ πατέρα καὶ μητέρα οὐκ ἐγνώρισας· ὁ γὰρ δημιουργός σου πατὴρ καὶ μητὴρ καὶ γένος ἐστι σὺν πᾶσι τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις*: *Life of Martha* 21 (p. 269); this may echo the *Life of Symeon* in which the child Symeon is said to have repeated, as a sign of his separation from earthly things, 'I have a father and I do not have a father; I have a mother and I do not have a mother' (*Life of Symeon* 5, p. 7).

[36] For a comparison of Martha's presentation in the two, see Hatlie 2009, p. 51 n. 78.

[37] See Van den Ven 1962–70, I, p. 87*.

[38] Martha is most active in *Life of Symeon* 1–8 (pp. 2–9); Symeon is led away in ibid. 10 (pp. 10–11); for his age, see ibid. 12 (p. 11).

of his disciple Konon after his death from the plague.[39] In these episodes, however, she plays only a supporting role, and her own life is paid little attention; we only learn of her death by chance, as a service held in her memory is the setting for one of Symeon's miracles.[40] Although she sometimes intercedes with Symeon, she never intercedes directly with God, and there is no suggestion that she can perform miracles.[41] Material evidence supports the view that Martha's cult was a late addition to the site. While later medieval pilgrim tokens from Symeon's shrine depict Martha (and the saint's most famous disciple, Konon) as well as Symeon, the earliest tokens feature Symeon alone.[42] Martha, then, does not seem to have been venerated as a saint at the shrine in the sixth century.

And yet her position was ambiguous from an early date. We do learn in passing from the *Life of Symeon* that the stylite held commemorative services in memory of his mother at the monastery.[43] It has been generally accepted—admittedly based in large part on the *Life of Martha*—that the south church in the monastic complex was built fairly soon after Martha's death to house her relic, and that Symeon intended that after his death he too would be buried there with her.[44] Martha therefore clearly had a privileged position at the shrine during her son's lifetime, despite seemingly not being recognised as a saint; it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the stylite's familial ties to his mother were the primary reason for her commemoration. Given the dominant ascetic discourse of the rejection of the biological family (although this was always complex, and often balanced with more positive comments on family ties), it is not surprising that Symeon's apparent devotion to his mother might be viewed with scepticism; and, more particularly, that her veneration at his cult might need defending.[45]

It is notable that while in parts of the *Life of Martha*, Martha's devotion, support, and moral concern for her son are presented as part of her piety, her hagiographer also emphasizes that her status does not derive merely from her link to Symeon; she has independent holiness.[46] After the monastery's manager had fallen ill due to neglect of Martha's veneration, he repented and recovered, and subsequently vowed to continue lighting the lamp on her tomb. Martha appeared

[39] Ibid. 26 (p. 35), 71 (p. 61), 105–7 (pp. 85–8), 113 (p. 93), 129 (p. 118).
[40] Ibid. 221 (p. 190).
[41] See e.g. ibid. 101 (p. 79), 127 (p. 127).
[42] Lafontaine-Dosogne 1967, pp. 143–58, 168–81; Drewer 1991–2, pp. 266–7. There are signs, however, that Martha was sometimes represented before the medieval period, since a mould for pilgrim tokens which may date to the seventh or eighth century has been found which does depict Martha and Konon (Lafontaine-Dosogne 1967, p. 148).
[43] *Life of Symeon* 221 (p. 190).
[44] Lafontaine-Dosogne 1967, pp. 122–8; Djobadze 1986, pp. 79–81; Henry 2015 pp. 39–41, 89–96, 132–7, and passim; Belgin-Henry 2018, pp. 151, 153. Henry does suggest that other factors may have contributed to the decision to expand the complex at this date.
[45] The literature on asceticism and family is considerable: for studies which emphasize the complexity of this topic, and elucidate more positive as well as negative attitudes towards family, see e.g. Jacobs 2003; Krawiec 2003; Schroeder 2020, esp. ch. 8.
[46] For her concern for her son, see e.g. *Life of Martha* 2 (p. 254), 9 (p. 260), 20 (pp. 267–8).

to him in his sleep, stating, 'All of you did not glorify me, *nor am I glorified because of my son*, but grace and glory came to me from the source whence I awaited the Lord with anxious expectation and he attended to me and heard my prayer [emphasis mine]'.[47] The hagiographer, through Martha's voice, states clearly that her glory is not merely a reflection of her son's; she has her own holiness.

Paul Van den Ven suggested that Martha's Life was written by a monk of Symeon's monastery who was particularly devoted to the saint's mother, felt that she had been neglected in her son's hagiography, and wanted to rectify this offense.[48] This is not impossible, but it seems more likely, given the apologetic passages discussed above emphasizing that Symeon had not created his mother's cult, and given the complex position of family loyalties within ascetic ideology, that the hagiographer had a more targeted goal: to justify the continued veneration of Martha, and in particular to promote the validity and importance of the memorial services in her honour. As we will see, the memorial services for her death play a crucial role in the text, particularly as a setting for her miracles. By showing Martha to be a powerful holy woman in her own right, and by associating her miracles with the rituals at her shrine, the *Life* encourages participation in her cult by offering the possibility of wonder-working: twice in the text the author explicitly states that miracles are still occurring at her tomb.[49] The hagiographer creates a new vision of Martha as independent saint, in part intended as a retrospective justification for her veneration, in part to create a new focus of cult on the 'Wonderful Mountain'. He is not afraid to depart from the picture of Martha given in the *Life of Symeon*. The new role given to Martha is not the only difference between her hagiographic Life and that of her son. The text displays a broader reorientation of approaches and attitudes, which may reflect a new way of responding to the challenges facing the cult and the monastery after the disasters of the sixth century.

A Reorientation of Priorities

Martha's hagiographer strikes a very different tone from the *Life of Symeon the Younger*. While he does continue some specific arguments of the earlier hagiographer, including a rejection of monetary transactions and an attack on the monk Angoulas, he eschews most of the apologetic and polemical lines of the *Life of Symeon*. The disasters affecting Antioch play a much smaller role in Martha's Life: the plague features, but military disasters and earthquakes do not. Instead of

[47] *Οὐχ ὑμεῖς με ἐδοξάσατε, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ χάριν τοῦ υἱοῦ μου δεδόξασμαι, ἀλλ' ἦλθέ μοι ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ δόξα ἐκεῖθεν ὅθεν ἀπεκδεχομένη ὑπέμεινα τὸν Κύριον καὶ προσέσχε μοι καὶ εἰσήκουσε τῆς δεήσεώς μου*: ibid. 40 (p. 283).

[48] Van den Ven, *Vie ancienne* I, p. 87*.

[49] *Life of Martha* 51 (p. 295), 73 (p. 314).

providing scapegoats for crisis, Martha's hagiographer adopts an individualistic focus, blaming people's sufferings on their failure to carry out proper cultic veneration. The *Life* is less ambitious in many respects than Symeon's; we do not encounter emperors or nobles, nor mass miracles wrought for large groups of people. Equally, whereas Symeon's hagiographer seemed to suppress other sources of sanctity, presenting Symeon as a unique beacon of holiness, Martha's hagiographer portrays a much more diverse landscape of salvation, commemorating various relics, holy men, and other vehicles of grace.

The *Life of Martha* does pick up on some individual lines of argument in the *Life of Symeon.* For instance, Martha's hagiographer presents a further attack on Angoulas, the bête-noire of the *Life of Symeon*: he claims that Angoulas attempted to impede the proper building of Martha's oratory, by persuading one of the builders to begin construction according to his own plans, rather than to those revealed by the deceased Martha to Symeon.[50] Unfortunately, it is difficult to be sure whether the author of the *Life of Martha* had additional information about Angoulas, and was, perhaps, one of his monastic opponents (which would suggest an early date for the *Life*), or whether he had just heard the name in the *Life of Symeon* or from oral traditions at the monastery and thus mentioned this well-known opponent of the saint to lend his account veracity, and to show that efforts to thwart the building of the oratory were in vain. Martha's hagiographer also continues the economic arguments of the *Life of Symeon*. As discussed in the previous chapter, Symeon is presented by his hagiographer as radically anti-economic, refusing to accept any gifts or to engage in monetary transactions. Martha's hagiographer continues this theme, claiming that Symeon had been unwilling to build his church complex on the 'Wonderful Mountain' until God promised 'that the work would be completed without money'.[51] These similarities to the *Life of Symeon*, which show that Martha's hagiographer was very familiar with the traditions of the saint's shrine and with the earlier hagiography, only serve to highlight the broader differences in emphasis between the two texts, which go far beyond the differing portrayals of Martha herself.

Most strikingly, the *Life of Martha* does not continue most of the apologetic and polemical lines of the *Life of Symeon*. It refers neither to paganism nor to the other forms of heterodoxy that are so prevalent in the earlier Life. No vitriolic attacks on local notables appear; indeed, almost all characters who appear in the *Life* are local villagers, or visitors whose social background is not specified. One exception, perhaps, is a certain Sergios, who we are told was the son of Antoninos the *φροντιστής* (overseer?), someone who presumably possessed some authority in local society. Sergios fell ill after refusing to venerate any corpse, including Martha's. He was only cured after he confessed, repented, and promised to respect

[50] Ibid. 50 (pp. 293–5).

[51] *ἄνευ χρημάτων πληροῦσθαι τὸ ἔργον*: ibid. 64 (p. 307).

Martha's body in future.[52] While this story features a prominent local committing a sin, his social status is not emphasized, and his sin and punishment are similar to those of other characters in the text; there is nothing to compare to the stories about rich sceptics of Symeon turning out to be crypto-pagans and meeting with dire punishments.

The hagiographer does continue to refer to scepticism about Symeon and his miracles, but it is not painted in socio-economic terms or associated with paganism. Martha, in her final speech to her son before her death, urges him:

> Don't let reproaches grieve you, child, I implore you. Don't be vexed at the disbelief of some people, but pray for everyone to the son of God, He who because of his boundless love of man attained such humility and said of those who crucified him, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing'.[53]

This might seem too generic to relate to particular criticism, but a subsequent exhortation does draw a connection to the saint's opponents in Antioch: 'Always remember the whole world in your requests to God; and pray too for your city in which you were born and its inhabitants . . . forgive the hard-hearted, because of the lovers of Christ who are in it [i.e., presumably, Antioch].'[54] The hagiographer thus alludes to opposition to the saint in Antioch, in a fairly conciliatory fashion.

In the final section of the text, relating to the relic of the True Cross, a monastic visitor to the shrine is afflicted with doubt and scepticism on his journey home, condemning Symeon as a magician and rejecting the clay pilgrimage tokens which he had apparently taken from the shrine:

> The Devil prompted him to say to himself about the servant of God that this man was a magician and this was why the powers worked in him. 'For from the beginning of time, except when the Lord was present (on earth), who ever saw or heard of anyone performing such signs? So they are not products of good works, and I have made a mistake in handling his clay tokens moulded from his image.'[55]

[52] Ibid. 35 (pp. 279–80).

[53] *Μή σε λυπείτωσαν, τέκνον, λοιδορίαι, παρακαλῶ· μηδὲ ἀγανάκτει ἐπὶ ἀπιστίᾳ τινῶν, ἀλλὰ πάντων ὑπερεύχου τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸν διὰ τὴν ἄμετρον αὐτοῦ φιλανθρωπίαν εἰς τοιαύτην ἐλάσαντα ταπείνωσιν καὶ λέγοντα περὶ τῶν σταυρωσάντων αὐτόν· 'Πάτερ, ἄφες αὐτοῖς, οὐ γὰρ οἴδασι τί ποιοῦσιν'*: ibid. 21 (p. 268). Cf. Luke 23:34.

[54] *Μνείαν ἀεὶ ποιοῦ ἐν ταῖς πρὸς Θεόν σου δεήσεσι τοῦ κόσμου παντός· ὑπερεύχου δὲ καὶ τῆς πόλεώς σου ἐν ᾗ ἐγεννήθης καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ . . . τοὺς σκληροκαρδίους συγγνώμην πάρεχε διὰ τοὺς ὄντας ἐπ' αὐτῇ φιλοχρίστους*: *Life of Martha* 22 (p. 269).

[55] *Ὑπέβαλε δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ διάβολος εἰπεῖν ἐν ἑαυτῷ περὶ τοῦ δούλου τοῦ Θεοῦ ὅτι ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος φάρμακος ἐστι καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἐνεργοῦσιν ἐν αὐτῷ αἱ δυνάμεις. 'Τίς γὰρ εἶδεν ἢ ἤκουσεν ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ Κυρίου τοσαῦτα σημεῖα γεγενῆσθαι ὑπό τινος; οὐκ ἔστιν οὖν ταῦτα χρηστῶν ἔργων, κἀγὼ πεπλάνημαι βαστάζων αὐτοῦ τὰς ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἐκτετυπωμένας ἐκ τῆς εἰκόνος αὐτοῦ σφραγῖδας*': ibid. 54 (p. 298).

The monk then threw the clay tokens on the fire (except for one which was accidentally saved by falling in his clothing).[56] He was immediately afflicted by leprosy, until he 'came to his senses', repented, apologized to the saint, and smeared himself with the remaining pilgrimage token. This is reminiscent of the more general accounts of scepticism about the validity of Symeon's miraculous powers as found in the *Life of Symeon*.[57] The need to refute scepticism about Symeon has not, then, disappeared for Martha's hagiographer, but he addresses the question in a different way, avoiding socio-economic polemic and the scapegoating of wealthy pagans.

Equally strikingly, the disasters that preoccupy the earlier hagiographer play a comparatively limited role in Martha's Life. An outbreak of the plague does occupy several chapters of the text: before Martha's death, she foresees some of the inhabitants of Daphne seeking Symeon's help against the plague, while after her death, both she and Symeon are said to have cured many inhabitants of local villages.[58] The severity of the plague is again stressed: 'for there was great mortality among men in that time.'[59] Yet no elaborate theological justifications for this outbreak are developed comparable to those in the *Life of Symeon*. Still more strikingly, neither the Persian invasion of Antioch nor the severe earthquakes in northern Syria, which occupy such a prominent place in the *Life of Symeon*, are mentioned at all by Martha's hagiographer. The *Life of Symeon* had given Martha a place in some of these dramatic events; on one occasion during an earthquake, she appealed to Symeon to prohibit visitors to the monastery for a day so that he could spend the time supplicating God; she later during the plague implored Symeon to ask God to spare his people.[60]

It is noteworthy that Martha's hagiographer does not recount these episodes and does not mention the earthquakes at all; given that he seems to be very familiar with the *Life of Symeon*, this must be seen as a deliberate omission. He thus adopts a very different approach towards the challenges of Symeon's career from that of the stylite's own biography: eschewing polemic, he refers to some of the tensions allusively, and veils others in complete silence. The hagiographer in fact seems less ambitious than the author of the *Life of Symeon* in his claims about the powers of holy men. He generally avoids recounting mass miracles conducted for the benefit of many people (the most ambitious are the healing of several villages from the plague; all the others relate to one or two individuals). We should

[56] Ibid. 55 (p. 299).

[57] There are no exactly comparable accounts of scepticism about Symeon's tokens in the stylite's own Life, but we do find, on the one hand, general suspicion that his miracles might be wrought through magic (see e.g. *Life of Symeon* 234 (p. 211)), and, on the other, a reluctance to accept that his tokens are as effective as contact with the saint himself (see ibid. 231 (p. 206), with Vikan 1984, pp. 72–3).

[58] *Life of Martha* 16 (p. 265); ibid. 34–5 (pp. 279–80), 37 (p. 281).

[59] *ἦν γὰρ τῷ χρόνῳ ἐκείνῳ θνήσις ἀνθρώπων μεγάλη*: ibid. 34 (p. 279).

[60] *Life of Symeon* 107 (p. 87), 126–7 (pp. 113–15).

remember, here, that the hagiographer may well have been writing during the period of Persian ascendancy in the Middle East, a time of particular strife, and one in which it became still harder to present saints as defensive barriers for the Christian Roman population.

This may relate too to another importance difference between the *Life of Martha* and the *Life of Symeon*; Martha's hagiographer is far more willing to recognize multiple sources of holiness and sanctity. As argued in the previous chapter, Symeon's hagiographer seems to suppress deliberately any explicit reference to rival holy men or relics, from Symeon Stylites the Elder to the holy Thomas whose body was reported to have stopped an outbreak of the plague in Antioch. Martha's hagiographer is much less exclusionary: not only does he present Martha's holiness as a complement to Symeon's, claiming that 'even now Christ ceaselessly works healings through her', he also refers to various other relics and sources of sanctity.[61] He draws upon the story of Thomas also recounted in the *Ecclesiastical History* of Evagrios Scholastikos. Evagrios reports that Thomas was initially buried in the 'tombs of the foreigners' in Daphne, but that, when his body kept miraculously appearing on top of new corpses added into the tomb, bishop Ephraim organized for his body to be translated to Antioch itself.[62] Martha's hagiographer refers to this more obliquely; Martha expresses the desire to be buried in the pandect in Daphne, where 'the blessed and holy Thomas' had lain until he was glorified and transferred with honour to Antioch.[63] The hagiographer thus tries to set Martha in relation to this renowned Antiochene holy men, perhaps reflecting a desire to integrate her cult into the broader regional holy landscape.

Martha is also presented as a devotee of numerous holy men and martyrs: she tells Symeon that 'journeying to every holy house continuously I have zealously implored the holy martyrs of Christ our God to shield and help you. I have honoured every holy man, stealing [?] prayers for you.'[64] This is particularly striking, since it suggests that even Symeon himself was in need of the intercession and prayers of martyrs and holy men. In addition, the final section of the text revolves around the acquisition of a piece of the 'life-giving' True Cross. The fragment of the Cross is sent to Symeon in a reliquary which also contains fragments from the rock of Golgotha and the rock rolled by the angel from

[61] *Καὶ νῦν δι' αὐτῆς ἀπαύστως ἐνεργεῖ Χριστὸς τὰ ἰάματα*: *Life of Martha* 73 (p. 314); similar comments are expressed in 51 (p. 295).

[62] Evagrios Scholastikos, *Ecclesiastical History* IV.35 (p. 185; trans. p. 240). A similar story about Thomas, albeit with some differences (it is set during the patriarchate of Domninos rather than Ephraim, and Thomas's body miraculously expelled women from the tomb) is recounted by John Moschos in the *Spiritual Meadow* 88 (col. 2915).

[63] *ὁ μακάριος καὶ ἅγιος Θωμᾶς*: *Life of Martha* 24 (p. 271).

[64] *εἰς πάντα οἶκον ἅγιον πορευομένη συχνῶς, ἐκτενῶς ἐδεόμην τῶν ἁγίων μαρτύρων Χριστοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν ὑπερασπίσαι σου καὶ ἀντιλάβεσθαι. Πάντα ὅσιον ἄνδρα ἐτίμησα, συλήσασα σοι προσευχάς*: ibid. 20 (p. 268).

Christ's tomb.[65] The hagiographer describes the relic of the Cross as 'more precious than every relic of the saints, than every treasure'.[66]

The hagiographer thus shows the 'Wonderful Mountain' in possession of multiple sources of holiness: not only Symeon himself, but also Martha and a relic of the True Cross. He also acknowledges the broader landscape of sanctity, referring to other Antiochene saints and conceding that even Symeon could benefit from others' prayers. As with the avoidance of large-scale miracles, this may represent a subtle downsizing of ambitions, a tacit acknowledgement that Symeon did not bear the full responsibility of interceding for humanity to God. This argument should not be pressed too far; Symeon still clearly bears considerable miraculous powers in the *Life* and is certainly regarded as a vessel of salvation. The Guardian of the Cross in Jerusalem, for instance, implores Symeon to intercede for him 'so that through your blessed prayers I may meet with some small mercy from the saviour Christ'.[67] Nonetheless, the multiplying of sources of holiness seems again to show a subtle shifting of approach away from the grander claims of the stylite's own hagiographer.

Above all, this changed approach is shown by Martha's hagiographer's exceptional interest in liturgy, ritual, and the sacraments. This is arguably the dominant theme of the *Life*, and one which knits together its unusual structure and sometimes divergent sections. Whereas Symeon's hagiographer used extensive descriptions of ritual to emphasize Symeon's 'integration' into the broader Church, Martha's hagiographer goes further, presenting liturgy and the sacraments as the key basis of Christian salvation.[68] At the same time, he presents an individualized view of miracles, placing responsibility for the avoidance of illness, for healings, and for salvation, on individual Christians' proper performance of ritual and liturgical practices.

Liturgy and Ritual Practice

Liturgy and ritual suffuse the *Life of Martha*, linking the different, and sometimes apparently disparate, sections of the work. In the first part of the text, describing her lifetime, Martha is not depicted as an ascetic; rather her life is marked by pious attendance to priests and monks, and by devoted participation in various liturgical rituals: 'she took care of the offering of many lights and much incense', while:

[65] Ibid. 69 (pp. 310–11).

[66] *παντὸς λειψάνου ἁγίων, παντὸς δὲ θησαυροῦ τιμιωτέραν*: ibid. 60 (p. 304).

[67] *ἵνα διὰ τῶν ὑμετέρων ὁσίων προσευχῶν τύχω μικροῦ ἐλέους παρὰ τοῦ σωτῆρος Χριστοῦ*: ibid. 69 (p. 311).

[68] On liturgy in the *Life of Symeon*, see Harvey 1998; Booth 2014, pp. 34–7.

> in all her days she did not miss the lamplight and dawn services, being especially enthusiastic for the night vigils performed at memorials for the holy martyrs. The first to attend the church and never held back by any concern, she partook of the life that saves us, the body and blood of the son of God . . . throughout the holy and divine liturgy she gave incense to the priests, asking them to join with her in her requests to God.[69]

A monk urged her to sit down in church, but she rebuked him respectfully, saying that sitting during the liturgy was contemptuous of God.[70] She is said to have admired, anointed, and refreshed priests.[71] Even her charity took place in a sacramental context: she provided cloths for farmers who were baptizing their children (and was at her request buried wrapped in some of these cloths), as well as taking care of the dead.[72] Martha's Life is far from the first hagiographic work to emphasize its subject's participation in church rituals. As we have seen, however, its author neglects other tropes of female piety such as asceticism and dutiful wifehood, with the effect that liturgical participation is presented as the key element in Martha's holiness.

Liturgy is still more important in the next section of the *Life*, Martha's death. She prepares for death by participating in the sacraments and the liturgy: she takes the Eucharist in Symeon's monastery, and goes to the church of John the Baptist to pray, 'since a service was being conducted'.[73] She tells Symeon in one of her last addresses to him that:

> During every service and before every altar, with endless incense I have offered tears to God for your survival, and journeying to every holy house continuously I have zealously implored the holy martyrs of Christ our God to shield and help you. I have honoured every holy man, stealing [?] prayers for you.[74]

As discussed above, this is especially noteworthy, as it suggests that not only Martha herself but also Symeon was in need of ritual supplications before God, and the intercession of martyrs and holy men.

[69] *Ἐπεμελεῖτο φώτων πολλῶν καὶ θυμιαμάτων προσαγωγῆς*: *Life of Martha* 2 (p. 254); *Ἐν ὅλοις δὲ τοῖς χρόνοις αὐτῆς λυχνικῶν καὶ ἑωθινῶν οὐκ ἀπελιμπάνετο, σπεύδουσα μάλιστα εἰς τὰς νυκτερινὰς διαγρηγορήσεις τὰς γινομένας ἐν ταῖς τῶν ἁγίων μαρτύρων μνήμαις. Συναγομένη δὲ πρώτη ἐν τῷ κυριακῷ καὶ μηδαμῶς ὑπό τινος φροντίδος κωλυομένη μετελάμβανε τὴν σωτήριον ζωὴν ἡμῶν, τὸ σῶμα καὶ τὸ αἷμα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ . . . . ἐν ὅλῃ δὲ τῇ ἁγίᾳ καὶ θείᾳ λειτουργίᾳ ἐπεδίδου τὸ θυμίαμα τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν, αἰτοῦσα καὶ αὐτοὺς συνεργῆσαι αὐτῇ ἐν ταῖς πρὸς Θεὸν δεήσεσιν αὐτῆς*: ibid. 3 (p. 255).

[70] Ibid. 4 (pp. 255–6). [71] Ibid. 7 (p. 258). [72] Ibid. 4 (p. 256), 28 (p. 274), 5 (pp. 256–7).

[73] Ibid. 19 (p. 267); *Τηνικαῦτα συνάξεως ἐπιτελουμένης*: ibid. 26 (p. 272).

[74] *Ἐν πάσῃ λειτουργίᾳ καὶ ἀπέναντι παντὸς θυσιαστηρίου μετὰ θυμιάματος ἀκαταπαύστου ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑπομονῆς σου δάκρυα προσέφερον τῷ Θεῷ καὶ εἰς πάντα οἶκον ἅγιον πορευομένη συχνῶς, ἐκτενῶς ἐδεόμην τῶν ἁγίων μαρτύρων Χριστοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν ὑπερασπίσαι σου καὶ ἀντιλάβεσθαι. Πάντα ὅσιον ἄνδρα ἐτίμησα, συλήσασα σοι προσευχάς*: ibid. 20 (p. 268).

To some extent, an emphasis on liturgical preparations for death is conventional, and must reflect actual practice as well as the hagiographer's interest.[75] Yet Martha's hagiographer goes further than most earlier hagiography, in stating explicitly that it was Martha's devotion to church, and participation in rituals and sacraments, that achieved her salvation. While it is true that her palace in heaven, seen by her in a vision before her death, was supposedly built by Symeon, the Virgin Mary says to her, 'look, honour has been given to you; stay here, as a reward for fearing the Lord and *honouring the church of God* [emphasis mine]'.[76] Furthermore, Martha herself emphasizes before her death that salvation is achieved through the Eucharist, saying in a prayer to God, 'I have gained confidence because I trust to be saved through the salvific participation in your life-giving body and blood, given to us by you for the forgiveness of mistakes, so that you may remove my transgressions and purify my sins'.[77]

After her death, too, the importance of appropriate funerary rites for salvation is stressed; after John, a lector and local villager, has a vision of a chariot of cherubim over Martha's tomb, Symeon tells him:

> Glorify the Lord, child. For you have found grace to see, as far as was possible for you, the holy creatures of the cherubim who rides a chariot and arrived in response to the invocation of the hymnody and sanctified in her relic her falling asleep in death, because both I and she, conceived in sins, needed release granted by him, while standing in the halls of the Lord's house.[78]

Symeon's claim that not only Martha, but he himself, needs a heavenly visitation in response to the hymnody to assure salvation, is particularly striking. Although liturgy is undoubtedly a key motif of the *Life of Symeon the Younger*—the text is suffused with mentions of incense, with elaborate descriptions of liturgical processions, and with references to the Eucharist—there is less sense that participation

[75] Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Macrina* is a particularly noteworthy example of an earlier hagiographic text which emphasizes its heroine's liturgical life and provides an extended, liturgically focused account of her death. On the liturgical implications of Macrina's Life, see Krueger 2000, pp. 484–510. Macrina is, of course, a very different figure from Martha: Gregory presents her as an aristocratic, philosophical, beautiful, and (moderately) ascetic virgin with strong family ties. The liturgical focus of Gregory's text is also very different from that of Martha's Life, as it lacks the strong cultic dimension of the latter: whereas Gregory's focus is on prayer and thanksgiving, Martha's hagiographer also, as we will see, emphasizes the importance of the rituals associated with saints' shrines.

[76] *Ἰδοὺ δεδώρηταί σοι ἡ τιμὴ αὕτη, καὶ κατάμενε ἐνθάδε, ἀνθ' ὧν ἐφοβήθης τὸν Κύριον καὶ ἐτίμησας τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ*: *Life of Martha* 17 (p. 266).

[77] *Τετόλμηκα τῇ σωτηρίῳ μεταλήψει τοῦ ζωοποιοῦ σου σώματος καὶ αἵματος πιστεύουσα σωθῆναι τῇ δεδωρημένῃ ἡμῖν παρὰ σοῦ εἰς συγχώρησιν παραπτωμάτων, ὅπως ἀφέλῃς τὰς ἀνομίας μου καὶ τὰς ἁμαρτίας μου καθαρίσῃς*: ibid. 23 (p. 270).

[78] *Δόξαζε, τέκνον, τὸν Κύριον· χάριν γὰρ ηὗρες θεάσασθαι καθὼς ἐχώρεις τὰ ἁγιαστικὰ ζῶα τοῦ ἐπιβεβηκότος ἐπὶ ἅρματος χερουβὶμ παραγενομένου ἐν τῇ ἐπικλήσει τῆς ὑμνῳδίας καὶ ἁγιάσαντος ἐν τῷ λειψάνῳ τοῦ θανάτου τὴν κοίμησιν, καθότι κἀγὼ καὶ αὐτὴ ἐν ἁμαρτίαις συλληφθέντες ἐχρήζομεν τῆς παρ' αὐτοῦ ἀφέσεως, ἐν αὐλαῖς οἴκου Κυρίου ἱστάμενοι*: ibid. 33 (pp. 278–9).

in ecclesiastical rites was the key requirement for salvation.[79] Rather, the focus on liturgy in the text has been interpreted as an attempt to emphasize the stylite's 'integration' within ecclesial worship.[80] The *Life of Martha* thus accords an even more important role to liturgy and the sacraments; the hagiographer uses her brief life and her lengthy death scene to present an inclusive vision of salvation, focusing on dedication to ecclesial rituals, participation in the Eucharist, and proper funeral rites.

In part, this reflects a growing tendency in seventh-century hagiography to emphasize the importance of participation in the sacraments and church rituals.[81] Leontios of Neapolis, in the *Life of John the Almsgiver*, recounts the story of a clergyman who never went to church and was jealous of his neighbour's—another priest's—prosperity, until discovering that the remedy was regular church attendance.[82] Leontios is still more explicit in his *Life of Symeon the Holy Fool*, making his hero include failure to take communion among a list of heinous crimes:

> While the saint was there (in Emesa), he cried out against many because of the Holy Spirit, and reproached thieves and fornicators. Some he faulted, *crying out that they had not taken communion often*, and others he reproached for perjury, so that through his inventiveness he nearly put an end to sinning in the whole city [emphasis mine].[83]

George, the author of the *Life of Theodore of Sykeon*, attributes to his holy man a long speech emphasizing the importance of attending church and participating in the liturgy, after his servants have failed to wake him for the night service out of concern for his health:

> For if, in the presence of a mortal king, not only the healthy, but even the mutilated and the sick hasten to praise him, how much more ought we run together zealously, by night and day, at all times, to praise and laud the heavenly and immortal king of glory, Christ our God, not only those of us who are in good bodily health, but also those who are ill should display enthusiasm, so that he

[79] In one incident in the stylite's youth the Eucharist is presented in soteriological terms: he is given it in a dream by a priest to save him after Satan has been afflicting him with sexual dreams (*Life of Symeon* 35 [p. 34]). Yet usually, even where the Eucharist features, it is not explicitly connected with salvation, even in the section in which Symeon is made a priest (132–5 (pp. 124–7)). In Symeon's lectures on the behaviour necessary for salvation (e.g. 24 (pp. 20–1), 113 (p. 92)), 171 (pp. 152–3)) he makes no mention of the sacraments, nor do they feature in the various accounts of the deaths of pious men (e.g. 36 (pp. 34–6), 109 (pp. 88–9), 257 (p. 223)).

[80] Harvey 1998; Booth 2014, pp. 34–7.

[81] For the growing importance of liturgy and the sacraments in hagiography across late antiquity and in particular in the seventh century, see Déroche 2002, p. 180; Booth 2014, pp. 7–43 and passim.

[82] Leontios of Neapolis, *Life of John the Almsgiver* 51 (pp. 401–2).

[83] Leontios of Neapolis, *Life of Symeon the Holy Fool* (p. 96, trans. p. 165).

> may both drive away our illnesses, if he knows that this would benefit us, and purify our souls from wicked deeds and thoughts and, like a debtor, pay to us the wages for our praises, wages which are not earthly but celestial? And just as one of the poorer people, if he is suddenly brought into the imperial halls and becomes a familiar and unhindered companion to the emperor, desires to have greater and longer association with him . . . how much more ought we to make greater our conversation of prayer and praise with the heavenly emperor, and to linger desirously in church, and not to hasten to fling off quickly the office of prayer, as if it were a very heavy burden and not something which brings a wage, and not to hasten, at devilish prompting, to depart from church as if from a prison, which is a great transgression? For we should bear this in mind, that when we enter into the house of the Lord, we ascend to heaven itself and we find the heavenly emperor seated on his throne of glory, surrounded by cherubim and seraphim . . . . and that, although all those attend him with fear, we are allowed to speak to him confidently through ourselves and not through an interpreter, and to praise him and to ask for what we want; but when we leave from there [i.e. church] . . . we descend to the earthly and material world, bound by our wicked thoughts and preoccupations.[84]

George's attention is focused very much on the practical (even if often delayed) benefits of church attendance: if we praise God, we are owed a heavenly reward; if we speak to him in church, we can ask for whatever we want. We may even be healed of our diseases, if he judges that this is in our best interests. It is thus, in a sense, a pragmatic rather than spiritual message, and might be thought to be aimed at a wide, not exclusively monastic audience. The act of attending church is made a key constitutive element of salvation.

[84] *Εἰ γὰρ ἐπὶ φθαρτοῦ βασιλέως οὐ μόνον οἱ ὑγιαίνοντες, ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ ἠκρωτηριασμένοι καὶ οἱ ἐν ἀσθενείαις εἰς τὴν αὐτοῦ ἐπείγονται εὐφημίαν, πόσῳ μᾶλλον ἡμεῖς εἰς τὴν τοῦ ἐπουρανίου καὶ ἀθανάτου βασιλέως τῆς δόξης Χριστοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν εὐφημίαν καὶ δοξολογίαν ὀφείλομεν σπουδαίως συντρέχειν νυκτός τε καὶ ἡμέρας κατὰ πᾶσαν ὥραν οὐ μόνον οἱ τῷ σώματι ἐρρωμένοι, ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ νοσοῦντες τὸ εὐπρόθυμον συνεισφέρειν, ἵνα καὶ τὰς νόσους ἡμῶν, ἐὰν γνῷ συμφέρειν ἡμῖν, ἀπελάσῃ καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν καθάρῃ τῶν πονηρῶν πράξεων τε καὶ ἐνθυμήσεων καὶ τοὺς μισθοὺς τῶν εὐφημιῶν οὐ γηΐνους, ἀλλ' οὐρανίους ἡμῖν ὡς χρεώστης ἀποδώσῃ· καὶ ὥσπερ τις τῶν μετριωτέρων, ἐὰν ἐν βασιλικαῖς αὐλαῖς ἄφνω εἰσαχθεὶς γνώριμος τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ συνόμιλος ἀκωλύτως γένηται, πλείονα καὶ μακροτέραν τὴν μετ' αὐτοῦ συντυχίαν γίνεσθαι ἐπιποθεῖ . . . πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἡμεῖς ὀφείλομεν πλείονα τὴν πρὸς τὸν ἐπουράνιον βασιλέα ἡμῶν διάλεξιν τῆς εὐχῆς καὶ δοξολογίας ποιεῖσθαι καὶ ἐγχρονίζειν ποθεινῶς ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ καὶ μὴ σπεύδειν ὥς τι βαρύτατον φορτίον καὶ οὐχ ὡς μισθοφόρον τὸν τῆς εὐχῆς κανόνα τάχιον ἀπορρῖψαι καὶ ἐπείγεσθαι ἐκ διαβολικῆς ἐνεργείας ὡς ἐκ φρουρᾶς τινος ἐξιέναι τῆς ἐκκλησίας, ὅπερ ἐστὶν μεγάλη παρανομία. Ἐν νῷ γὰρ ὀφείλομεν ἔχειν τοῦτο, ὅτι ἐν τῷ εἰσέρχεσθαι ἡμᾶς εἰς τὸν κυριακὸν οἶκον εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν αὐτὸν ἀνερχόμεθα καὶ τὸν οὐράνιον βασιλέα εὑρίσκομεν καθήμενον ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου τῆς δόξης, κυκλούμενον ὑπὸ τῶν χερουβὶμ καὶ σεραφίμ . . . καὶ ὅτι πάντων ἐκείνων μετὰ φόβου παρεστώτων ἡμεῖς συγχωρούμεθα αὐτῷ τεθαρρηκότες δι' ἑαυτῶν καὶ οὐ δι' ἑρμηνέως διαλέγεσθαι καὶ εὐφημεῖν αὐτὸν καὶ αἰτεῖν ἅπερ ἂν θέλωμεν· ὅταν δὲ πάλιν ἐξερχώμεθα ἐκεῖθεν . . . εἰς τὸν ἐπίγειον καὶ ὑλώδη κόσμον καταβαίνομεν δεσμούμενοι ὑπὸ τῶν πονηρῶν λογισμῶν καὶ φροντίδων*: George of Sykeon, *Life of Theodore of Sykeon* 164 (I, pp. 150–1).

Martha's hagiographer is thus far from unique in his interest in ecclesial rituals and in the sacraments; in general, seventh-century hagiography was increasingly oriented towards the liturgical. He does, however, go further than most of his contemporaries, in choosing as his hero a figure who bears no resemblance to the traditional ascetic, monastic subjects of hagiography. Whereas in the Lives of Theodore of Sykeon, John the Almsgiver, and Symeon the Holy Fool, as in other contemporary examples, the new emphasis on liturgy is balanced by a more conventional interest in asceticism, in the *Life of Martha* liturgy predominates. This is not to suggest that Martha's hagiographer completely rejected the traditional model of the holy man: in the *Life* we still find occasional references to Symeon's performance of impressive miracles.[85] Yet his choice not to focus on Symeon but on a holy figure presented in very different terms suggests that, even more than many of his contemporaries, he was interested in exploring a different view of piety, and of salvation; salvation is clearly attainable for even an ordinary Christian layperson, as long as he or she is devoted to the rituals of both church and saint's cult.

How comprehensive, however, is the vision of Martha's hagiographer? Is he genuinely concerned to encourage devotion to ecclesial and cultic rituals in general, or is his intention solely to promote participation in the cults of Symeon and his mother on the 'Wonderful Mountain'? The answer, arguably, is twofold. In the first part of the *Life*, that dealing with Martha's lifestyle and her death, it does seem that the author presents a general model for salvation. His descriptions of Martha's devotion to services in honour of the martyrs, of her care for priests, and of her visits to 'every holy house' and 'every holy man', as well as his emphasis on the salvific powers of the Eucharist and of the funeral hymnody, do not appear to be tied to a particular cult (although her devotion to Symeon is repeatedly stressed).[86] After the narrative of her death, however, the hagiographer's focus changes: he is still preoccupied with liturgy and ritual, but now focuses predominantly on the ceremonies at Martha's shrine. In other words, his ambitions appear to shift from providing a general paradigm for the ideal worshipper to reinforcing the importance of participation in the cultic community on the 'Wonderful Mountain'.

This new focus emerges very shortly after Martha's death, in the descriptions of her funeral rites. The hagiographer recounts, in some detail, the series of liturgical acts performed in her honour: her initial burial in Daphne and the transfer of her body from Daphne to Symeon's monastery are accompanied by psalms, hymns, and incense; when she is brought to the monastery an all-night vigil is performed before her tomb is dug, and in the morning a crowd of clergy and laymen gather, who bury her and perform the Eucharist and funeral ceremony.[87] After the

[85] *Life of Martha* 9 (p. 260), 16 (p. 265), 34 (p. 279).
[86] See e.g. ibid. 2 (p. 254), 3 (p. 255), 6 (p. 258), 8–9 (pp. 259–60).
[87] Ibid. 28 (p. 274), 30 (p. 275); ibid. 32 (p. 277).

Eucharist, villagers from Gandigoron come to the monastery, and perform another all-night vigil, 'so that they also might reap the fruits of the blessed woman's prayers', implying that participation in her liturgical remembrance was necessary in order to benefit from her intercession.[88]

The hagiographer's desire to encourage dedication to and participation in the rites at her shrine becomes still clearer in the next section of the *Life*, that dealing with Martha's posthumous miracles. Many of the miracles take place in a liturgical or ritual context: for example, a man from Lycaonia who had been afflicted by demons for thirty years, so that he could not hear the divine liturgy, was healed during the nocturnal odes, having being dragged by an invisible power to Martha's tomb.[89] Sergios son of Antoninos, from the village of Charandamas, was cured of a severe fever at the rites for the thirtieth day after Martha's funeral.[90] The lamps from her all-night vigils also had healing properties: John, the lector, 'found a good moment and, unnoticed by everyone, took the wicks of the lamps being burnt for the night vigil'; he took them to his village where he used them to heal the sick and drive out demons.[91] By connecting Martha's performance of miracles with the liturgical ceremonies at her shrine, the hagiographer seems to be encouraging attendance at these services.

He is also, more specifically, encouraging proper ritual practice, in particular by cautionary tales involving those who neglected their duties. As discussed earlier in the chapter, several stories in the *Life* report that monks and other visitors fell ill after refusing to venerate Martha's body or to light the candle on her tomb. These have a clear didactic purpose, warning the audience of the dangers inherent in neglecting rituals. Indeed, it is arguable that one of the primary functions of the work is to teach the audience how to be a good worshipper. The composite (and unusual) nature of the work, consisting of a short biography followed by an extended account of miracles, facilitates this. Whereas a traditional holy Life, with its emphasis on worldly renunciation and on asceticism, does not provide a realistic role model for most worshippers, the *Life of Martha* is particularly effective as a didactic work: it combines a paradigmatic Life, stripped of extraneous biographical detail, whose protagonist is essentially depicted as an ideal devotee of shrines and holy men, with miracles, which by their structure are very much focused on what a supplicant should do in order to gain divine assistance.[92] This is not to deny earlier saints' Lives any didactic role: clearly, they were often intended at least in part to be instructive, and they too contained

[88] *Ὅπως καὶ αὐτοὶ τοὺς καρποὺς τῶν εὐχῶν τῆς ὁσίας τρυγήσωσιν*: ibid. 33 (p. 278).

[89] Ibid. 41 (pp. 283–4). [90] Ibid. 35–6 (pp. 279–81).

[91] *Εὑρηκὼς καιρὸν καὶ λαθὼν πάντας ἐπῆρε τῶν εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγρυπνίαν καιομένων κανδηλῶν τὰ ἐνλύχνια*: ibid. 37 (p. 281).

[92] Peter Brown has argued (focusing on Western Europe but implicitly extending his arguments across the Christian world) that the 'notion of imitable sanctity is a theme as vivid and colourful, but as superficial, as a growth of lichen across an ancient rock', and that, in general, saints were sacred by virtue of their inimitability: Brown 2000, p. 22 and passim.

warnings against those who did not put their faith in the holy men. Some saints' Lives, including the *Life of Symeon the Younger*, contain numerous accounts of miracles performed by the holy men, which could themselves contain guidance for potential supplicants at the shrine. Yet saints' Lives are oriented on the whole towards the perspective of the saint, whereas in the independent miracle collections of deceased saints the supplicant takes the primary role; we perceive the saint through their eyes. The focus is thus on the experience of the supplicant, making them a particularly effective didactic medium for teaching proper cultic practice.[93]

The unusual feature of the *Life of Martha* is the combination, within a single work, of these instructive miracle stories with the short Life of the saint herself: the text's audience is therefore presented first with the exemplary paradigm of the life of the perfect worshipper, and subsequently with miracle stories which warn against the dangerous consequences of improper ritual practice. The work also differs notably from most late sixth- and seventh-century miracle collections, in that it relates to a recently deceased saint, whereas the majority concern long-established cults of early Christian martyrs (including Cosmas and Damian, Cyrus and John, Artemios, and Demetrios). This highlights, again, Martha's exceptional relatability: she was a near-contemporary figure who had died an ordinary death, rather than a famous, martyred, hero from an era of Christian history which had gained legendary status.

The focus on the experience of the supplicant means that primary responsibility for the success of healing miracles is generally placed on the afflicted individual and their performance of proper ritual practice, rather than on the saint. Martha's hagiographer suggests that, at least within Symeon's monastery, disasters only afflicted sinners. After one monk of the monastery, 'possessed by a scornful and disbelieving thought', grumbled and quenched the candle on Martha's coffin, he fell very ill.[94] He realised that he must have sinned: 'and so since the grace given to the holy man did not allow anything bad to befall any of them unless one of his commands was disobeyed, the brother naturally asked what he had done wrong.'[95] He is only cured after confessing and repenting of his sin. Responsibility for well-being thus lies with the individual: illnesses are punishments for sins, and healing can be secured, as the conclusions of this and similar stories show, through repentance and proper liturgical veneration of Martha. Similar stories in which individuals who misbehave are punished until they repent and are cured do appear in the *Life of Symeon* as in many other hagiographies; this is no innovation by Martha's hagiographer. But the predominance of these stories, combined with the avoidance of larger-scale miracles,

[93] I discuss the didactic nature of miracle collections at further length in Parker 2016, pp. 118–21; see also Maraval 1981.

[94] *περιφρονήσεως καὶ ἀπιστίας λογισμῷ κατασχεθείς*: *Life of Martha* 43 (p. 285).

[95] *Ἐπειδὴ οὖν ἡ δεδωρημένη τῷ ἁγίῳ χάρις ἐκτὸς παραβάσεως ἐντολῆς αὐτοῦ οὐδὲν συνεχώρει κακὸν ἐπελθεῖν τινι αὐτῶν, εἰκότως ἠρώτα ὁ ἀδελφὸς τί ἔτυχεν ἡμαρτηκώς*: ibid. 43 (p. 285).

suggests an effort to refocus responsibility for salvation away from the saint and on to the supplicant.[96]

The liturgical and ritual themes of the *Life* come to a crescendo in its final sections, as the hagiographer completes his portrayal of the sacred origins of the ceremonies at Martha's shrine. The penultimate major section of the *Life*, that dealing with the construction of an oratory for Martha and Symeon's bodies, is suffused with images of incense, prayer, and processions. The series of visions witnessed by the brothers of the monastery encouraging the construction of the shrine were highly liturgical. Symeon had a vision of the shrine being built, and the tomb being moved, 'and young children circling around the coffin and singing to God most beautifully and delightfully and echoing one another's alleluia'.[97] One of the brothers saw Martha outlining the shape of the oratory, and her tomb surrounded by candelabras and shining lights and people singing psalms and alleluias.[98] Symeon again, in a passage which is lengthy but worth quoting, saw Martha performing a divine doxology which affected his own liturgical practice:

> He saw the blessed woman . . . with great sweetness sending a melodious and delightful angelic utterance on high and saying three times, 'Glory to you, God, glory to you, alleluia', and the whole *mandra* echoed with her as if uttering a voice, and her relic in the tomb was shaken by the doxology. And seized by fear and joy at such grace which God had given to His servant-woman, he remembered divine scripture saying, 'humbled bones will rejoice'.[99] Then he stayed still, guarding in his heart that song of the doxology towards God, and from his soul's delight he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and joined in echoing the heavenly doxology. When the time for the nightly hymns called them, the brothers assembled with him as usual, and taught by him they too joined in echoing that God-given hymn until the first dawning of the Sabbath. And he enjoined that henceforth the same should be done at the lamplight service of the Sabbath and of holy Sunday and every evening, one brother reciting such a hymn three times in front of the tomb and everyone chanting three times in response.[100]

[96] For this theme in other miracle collections of the sixth and seventh centuries, see below, pp. 211–12.

[97] *Παῖδάς τε ὡραίους περικυκλοῦντας τὴν σορὸν καὶ καλὰ λίαν καὶ τερπνὰ ὑμνοῦντας τὸν Θεὸν καὶ ὑπηχοῦντας ἀλλήλοις τὸ ἀλληλούϊα*: *Life of Martha* 45 (p. 287).

[98] Ibid. 46–7 (pp. 288–9).

[99] Psalms 50(51):10(8).

[100] *Εἶδε τὴν μακαρίαν . . . μετὰ ἡδύτητος πολλῆς εὐμελῆ καὶ τερπνὴν ἀγγελικὴν εἰς ὕψος ἀναπέμπουσαν φωνὴν καὶ λέγουσαν ἐκ τρίτου· 'Δόξα σοι, ὁ Θεός, δόξα σοι, ἀλληλούϊα', καὶ συνήχει ἡ μάνδρα ὅλη ὥσπερ φωνὴν διδοῦσα, καὶ τὸ λείψανον αὐτῆς ἐν τῇ θέσει ἐδονεῖτο τῇ δοξολογίᾳ. Καὶ τρόμῳ καὶ χαρᾷ συσχέθεις ἐπὶ τῇ τοσαύτῃ χάριτι τοῦ Θεοῦ ἣ δέδωκε τῇ δούλῃ αὐτοῦ, ὑπόμνησιν ἔλαβε τῆς θείας γραφῆς λεγούσης· 'Ἀγαλλιάσονται ὀστέα τεταπεινωμένα'. Τότε ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ ἔμεινεν διαφυλάττων τὸ μέλος ἐκεῖνο τῆς πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν δοξολογίας, καὶ ἐκ τῆς χαρᾶς τῆς ψυχῆς*

Here Symeon's visionary experience directly affected the liturgy as practised at the monastery; the chant he heard in his vision was apparently incorporated into the lamplight services. The hagiographer thus presents the origins of the current rituals at the shrine as supernatural, thereby sacralizing both the rites themselves and, by implication, their participants. Even the planning of the shrine was sanctified by ritual; Symeon, on Sunday, ordered the plan for the oratory to be drawn, 'scattering incense'.[101] When Martha's body was transferred to the completed shrine, priests and faithful laymen gathered, with further psalming and hymning, and miracles were performed.[102] Every stage of the construction of the oratory, from preliminary inspiration, to practical planning, and its culmination in the translation of Martha's body, was thus marked and sanctified by liturgical rituals.

The final section of the *Life*, the account of Symeon's acquisition of a relic of the True Cross, stands apart from the rest of the *Life* and may, as suggested above, have been absent from the work as originally conceived and written. Martha is noticeably less active here: of the nineteen 'chapters' (52–70), she is mentioned in only seven, usually briefly, and never speaks. The only miracles are performed through Symeon, not Martha. The lengthy exchange of elaborate letters between Symeon and the *staurophylax* (Guardian of the Cross) Thomas has no parallels in other parts of the work. Nonetheless, this section is thematically linked to the rest of the *Life* through, again, the liturgy.[103] Symeon asks God for a piece of the cross:

> For the memorial of your servant-woman whom you have taken to yourself, in return for making known to her faithful soul how to carry in her hands your life-giving cross, when I ascended from power to power to this elevation, and she went ahead in a flood of tears and chanted this refrain: 'Save us, son of God, who was crucified for us, alleluia.'[104]

Martha is thus associated with the cross through past ritual; she carried a cross in the procession in which Symeon moved to his column in the new monastery.[105] Furthermore, it becomes clear that the relic of the True Cross, once attained by

ἠγαλλιάσατο ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι καὶ συνυπήχει καὶ αὐτὸς τὴν οὐράνιον δοξολογίαν. Τοῦ δὲ καιροῦ καλοῦντος διὰ τὰς νυκτερινὰς ὑμνῳδίας, συνήχθησαν κατὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς πρὸς αὐτὸν οἱ ἀδελφοί, καὶ μαθόντες παρ᾽ αὐτοῦ συνυπήχουν καὶ αὐτοὶ τὴν θεόσδοτον ἐκείνην ὑμνῳδίαν ἕως πρωῒ ἐπιφωσκοῦντος σαββάτου. Λοιπὸν οὖν καὶ ἐν τῷ λυχνικῷ τοῦ τε σαββάτου καὶ τῆς ἁγίας κυριακῆς καὶ κατὰ πᾶσαν δὲ ἑσπέραν τοῦτο ἐπέτρεψε γίνεσθαι, ἑνὸς ἀδελφοῦ ἔμπροσθεν τῆς σοροῦ τρίτον λέγοντος τὸν τοιοῦτον ὕμνον καὶ πάντων τρίτον ὑποψαλλόντων: *Life of Martha* 48 (pp. 289–90).

[101] *Βαλὼν θυμίαμα*: ibid. 49 (p. 290). [102] Ibid. 51 (p. 295).

[103] See Van den Ven 1962–70, I, pp. 88*–9*.

[104] *Εἰς ἀνάμνησιν ἧς προσελάβου δούλης σου, ἀνθ᾽ ὧν ἐγνώρισας τῇ πιστῇ αὐτῆς ψυχῇ βαστάσαι ἐν ταῖς χερσὶ τὸν ζωοποιόν σου σταυρὸν, μεταίροντός μου ἐκ δυνάμεως εἰς δύναμιν ἐπὶ ταύτην τὴν ἀνάβασιν, προπορευομένης αὐτῆς ἐν πλήθει δακρύων καὶ τόδε τὸ ᾄσμα λεγούσης· 'Σῶσον ἡμᾶς, υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ σταυρωθεὶς δι᾽ ἡμᾶς, ἀλληλούϊα'*: *Life of Martha* 52 (p. 297).

[105] *Life of Symeon* 113 (p. 93).

Symeon, will be connected to Martha through liturgy: he tells the priest Paul, envoy of the *staurophylax*, that he wants the relic 'to be venerated on the day in which His [God's] love of man consented to sanctify my mother's falling asleep'.[106] The *Life* claims that the relic of the cross was brought to Symeon's monastery on the one-year anniversary of his ascent to the column—although other chronological indicators suggest that this was in fact impossible—highlighting the author's desire to associate the arrival of the cross with important ceremonies at the monastery.[107] The section concludes with a detailed description of the memorial service held on the first anniversary of Martha's death:

> When the twelve-month period was complete, it was time for the first memorial of the blessed Martha's falling asleep, and although the brothers said nothing to anyone, by the grace of God great crowds of men and women assembled with candles and lamps to conduct her memorial service. They performed an all-night vigil and then, just before dawn, the life-giving cross was brought forward and all those who had assembled paid reverence to it with hymns, crying: 'We revere your cross, Master, and we glorify your holy resurrection.' After the *proskynesis* the priest Antonios took the cross—while the deacons escorted it in procession with fans and censers, chanting, 'save us, son of God, who was crucified for us, alleluia'—and laid it down in the treasury. And after a series of readings they celebrated a perfect [eucharistic] service, at which the servant of God conducted the divine mystery.[108]

This scene firmly places the relic of the True Cross within the ritual context of the whole *Life*; again we see candles, lamps, an all-night vigil, psalming and the Eucharist, all in honour of Martha's memory. The hagiographer, by emphasizing the unparalleled value of the Cross—he describes Symeon requesting 'something more precious than every relic of the saints, than every treasure, a visible and venerable part of the Lord's unblemished and salvific cross'[109]—implies that its

[106] *Ἐπὶ τὸ προσκυνεῖσθαι ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐν ᾗ ηὐδόκησεν ἡ αὐτοῦ φιλανθρωπία τῆς ἐμῆς μητρὸς ἁγιάσαι τὴν κοίμησιν*: *Life of Martha* 60 (p. 304).

[107] Van den Ven 1962–70, II, p. 309 n. 2.

[108] *Πληρωθέντος δὲ τοῦ δωδεκαμηνιαίου χρόνου, ἐνέστη ἡ πρώτη μνεία τῆς κοιμήσεως τῆς μακαρίας Μάρθας, καὶ μηδενὶ μηδὲν εἰρηκότων τῶν ἀδελφῶν, συνῆλθον τῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ χάριτι ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ γυναικῶν πλήθη πολλὰ μετὰ κηρῶν τε καὶ λαμπάδων, ὥστε τὴν σύναξιν τῆς μνείας αὐτῆς ἐπιτελέσαι· καὶ πάννυχον ἀγρυπνίαν ποιήσαντες, ὄρθρου λοιπὸν βαθέως, προτεθέντος τοῦ ζωοποιοῦ σταυροῦ προσεκύνησαν πάντες οἱ συνελθόντες μεθ' ὕμνων βοῶντες 'Τὸν σταυρόν σου προσκυνοῦμεν, δέσποτα, καὶ τὴν ἁγίαν σου ἀνάστασιν δοξάζομεν.' Μετὰ δὲ τὴν προσκύνησιν λαβὼν ὁ πρεσβύτερος Ἀντώνιος τὸν σταυρόν, διακόνων ὀψικευόντων μετὰ ῥιπιδίων καὶ θυμιατηρίων καὶ ψαλλόντων· 'Σῶσον ἡμᾶς, υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ σταυρωθεὶς δι' ἡμᾶς, ἀλληλούϊα', ἀπέθετο αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ κειμηλιαρχίῳ. Καὶ γενομένης ἀκολουθίας τῶν ἀναγνωσμάτων ἐπετέλεσαν τελείαν σύναξιν, τοῦ δούλου τοῦ Θεοῦ τὴν θείαν μυσταγωγίαν ἱερουργήσαντος*: *Life of Martha* 70 (pp. 311–12).

[109] *τινα παντὸς λειψάνου ἁγίων, παντὸς δὲ θησαυροῦ τιμιωτέραν, ἐμφανῆ καὶ σεβασμίαν μερίδα τοῦ ἀχράντου δεσποτικοῦ καὶ σωτηρίου ξύλου*: ibid. 60 (p. 304).

acquisition conferred still greater status and power on the memorial ceremonies on the 'Wonderful Mountain'.

Conclusion

The liturgical rhythms of the shrine, and in particular the memorial services for Martha's death, provide the main unifying theme across the *Life of Martha*. At one level, this has a pragmatic function: to encourage participation in these memorial services and thereby to promote the cult of the shrine on the 'Wonderful Mountain'. There seems to be an apologetic motivation at play: the hagiographer repeatedly defends Symeon from any accusation of having promoted Martha's cult for self-interested reasons. Martha's position as a mother of an ascetic venerated in her own right was very unusual and seems to have required defending. More broadly, however, the focus on liturgy seems to reflect a new approach to the challenge of sustaining a saint's cult in a time, the early seventh century, of widespread crisis. The text instructs its audience in how to live a good, liturgical, and sacramental life as a devotee of the saints, more comprehensively than would be possible in a traditional Life of an ascetic holy man; Martha is a direct model for her own worshippers in a way which her son Symeon could not be. This is not to say that the *Life of Martha* rejects the old model of the holy man—Symeon still appears to possess impressive powers in the work, although they are the focus of less attention—but it does seem to be exploring newer, and in some ways more practical, models for holiness. The text is in many respects less ambitious in scope than Symeon's Life: no emperors or great nobles appear as devotees of the saint; there are few mass miracles; and the miracles are almost exclusively healing miracles. The hagiographer acknowledges multiple sources of sanctity and holiness, and avoids the polemical attacks on rich pagans which are such a prominent theme in the stylite's Life. This might be because the hagiographer's subject is a woman, and in some respects only an adjunct to her more powerful son. It is more likely, however, given the period in which the *Life of Martha* seems to have been produced, that its character in fact reflects wider developments in attitudes to the holy; in the late sixth and seventh century many miracle collections of male saints were produced which showed similar tendencies towards less ambitious, predominantly medical, miracles, and in which the Lives of holy figures were diversifying, as traditional, extravagantly ascetic, monastic miracle workers lost their dominant hold over hagiographers' imaginations. It is these wider developments in hagiography, and their implications for our understanding of the Lives of Symeon and Martha, that form the subject of the final chapter of this book.

5

Hagiography and the Crises of the Sixth and Seventh Centuries

The natural and military disasters of the sixth century, and the military crises of the seventh, sent shockwaves across east Roman society. These crises left their mark on a wide range of sources from many genres.[1] To take but a few examples from the sixth century, the hymns of Romanos the Melodist, the novels of Justinian, and the letters of Barsanouphios and John of Gaza all contain efforts to explain and justify why God chose to inflict disasters on his empire.[2] From the seventh century, the Questions and Answers of Anastasios of Sinai perhaps best show the spiritual difficulties faced by Christians in coping with the defeats to Islam.[3] These and other sources reveal that disasters provoked questions about causation, divine providence, and the special status of the empire, which Christian authors from diverse backgrounds sometimes struggled to answer. Hagiographers, however, faced particular challenges, since they had not only to tackle the question of theodicy but also to show how their saints were positioned between the will of God and the will of their supplicants. This was a conceptual problem at the best of times, but gained much greater urgency and emotional importance in the context of crisis.

This chapter, therefore, will focus on hagiography, looking first at sixth- and seventh-century Lives of holy men, in particular those of Nicholas of Sion, Theodore of Sykeon, and George of Choziba. Their hagiographers adopted a range of strategies for tackling the challenges facing saints in this period, all of which reveal the uneasy position of intercessors in times of crisis. The chapter will then examine long-term religious developments which had rendered holy men of

[1] On responses to the plague, see esp. Kaldellis 2007b; on those to earthquakes, Dagron 1981; on reactions to sixth-century disasters more generally, Meier 2003; Dal Santo 2012. On reactions to seventh-century crisis, see esp. Booth 2014.

[2] For Romanos the Melodist, see Kontakion 54 (pp. 462–71); in the first part of the kontakion Romanos argues, drawing on examples from both Old and New Testaments, that God has often appeared to act cruelly and angrily to bring about a good result. For Justinian, see esp. Justinian, *Novels* 77 and 141 (pp. 381–3, 703–4); for Barsanouphios and John, see esp. Barsanouphios and John, *Letter* 569 (III, pp. 730–4).

[3] The Questions are suffused with discussion of theodicy and causation; some deal explicitly with the Arab conquests, including, for example, Question 101: 'Is it true of all the evil things done by the Arabs against the lands and nations of the Christians, that they have done them against us completely at God's command and with his approval?': Anastasios of Sinai, *Questions and Answers* 101 (p. 161, trans. p. 230). On Anastasios, see esp. Haldon 1992.

Symeon Stylites the Younger and Late Antique Antioch: From Hagiography to History. Lucy Parker, Oxford University Press.
 DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780192865175.003.0006

this period particularly vulnerable to accusations of failure in the face of disaster. By the late sixth century, hagiographers were making far more ambitious claims about their saints' capacities than had been the case in the fourth and early fifth centuries. In addition, saints had become increasingly implicated with emperors and the fate of the empire, making them particularly vulnerable to accusations of failure in times of military crisis. Finally, the chapter will consider the miracle collections of long-dead saints that became popular in this period, suggesting that certain features of this genre as it developed made it particularly suitable for a time of crisis. Most of the late sixth- and early seventh-century miracle collections focus on healing miracles for individuals or small groups of supplicants; more ambitious miracles are avoided, and responsibility for the success of the miracle is placed largely on the supplicant rather than the saint. This does not seem simply to be generic convention, as similar developments are found in texts of other genres, notably the *Life of Martha*, and since some miracle collections did transgress these norms. The chapter thus provides a broader context for the texts associated with Symeon's cult, arguing that the tensions evinced in the *Life of Symeon*, and the reorientation of priorities visible in the *Life of Martha*, are not anomalous and unexpected, but rather reflect broader ideological developments in the period and across the whole of late antiquity.

Saints' Lives and Disasters

The disasters of the sixth century are reflected in various saints' Lives from the period. Thus, for example, Eutychios of Constantinople is said to have led a procession which successfully quelled an outbreak of the plague in Constantinople; he also predicts that disasters would later strike the capital 'because of our sins and immoral habits', asking that if the punishment could not be averted, he himself should be allowed to die before it took place.[4] The earthquakes in Antioch had sufficient impact to be referred to even in Lives set in other regions: thus the Palestinian monk Theodosios is said by his biographer Theodore of Petra to have predicted one of the terrible quakes of the early sixth century.[5] Even miaphysite hagiographies refer to military disasters: Elias, author of the *Life of John of Tella*, praises his saint's family, who were from the city of Callinicum in Syria, and notes that Callinicum contained many other virtuous people. Elias seems worried, however, that people might deny that the saint's family were particularly virtuous, anticipating them asking, 'If some of [Callinicum's] inhabitants are so adorned with virtue, why then was it struck by the Assyrian's rod?' (an apparent reference

[4] *διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα ἡμῶν τὰ μὴ ἀγαθά*: Eustratios Presbyter, *Life of Eutychios*, lines 2510–11 (p. 80).

[5] Theodore of Petra, *Life of Theodosios* (p. 87); see above p. 20.

to the Persian victory at the Battle of Callinicum in 531); he produces a string of biblical citations to explain that God's punishments have always struck the good as well as the wicked.[6] He ends this digression with a warning that those who believe themselves to be virtuous should not think that this will protect them from divine punishment, 'for the just are also afflicted when sinners are struck down'.[7]

Most hagiographers of this period, however, do not deal with the disasters in such great depth, and with such conflicted and competing measures, as the author of the *Life of Symeon*; this probably reflects the unique sufferings of Antioch in the sixth century.[8] Yet one other, little-studied, sixth-century Life does betray some of the anxieties and tensions of the stylite's biography: the *Life of Nicholas of Sion*, a Lycian saint who became bishop of Pinara.[9] This text, which was perhaps composed soon after the death of the saint in 564, has a complicated transmission history and has not been fully critically edited.[10] Like the *Life of Symeon*, it shows some signs of being a compilation, and contains a considerable amount of polemical material, in this case directed against the saint's brother Artemas.[11]

Most interestingly, again like the *Life of Symeon*, it contains an elaborate and complex account of an outbreak of plague in Lycia. The account follows several stories evincing hostility to Artemas.[12] The narrative voice abruptly shifts from the third to the first person; apparently Nicholas himself is relating the story.[13] The holy man recounts that he once had a vision of an angel coming to him on horseback and saying, 'Come here, O minister of Christ, behold what is

[6] Elias, *Life of John of Tella* (ed. p. 38; trans. Ghanem 1970, p. 48).

[7] ܡܛܠ ܕܐܦ ܟܐܢܐ ܡܬܢܓܕܝܢ ܟܕ ܚܛܝܐ ܡܬܡܚܝܢ.: ibid. (ed. p. 39. My translation).

[8] As discussed in Chapter 1.

[9] The *Life of Nicholas of Sion* has recently been discussed in Rizos 2019.

[10] The date of his death differs in the surviving manuscripts of the *Life*, but Anrich has argued persuasively that 6 December 564 is the most likely option: Anrich 1913–17, II, pp. 214–16. The date of the text's composition is less certain: Anrich argued that it must have written been shortly after Nicholas's death, since the author seems to have been an acquaintance of the saint and recounts many details about his life: ibid. II, pp. 17–220. His contentions seem to have been accepted by the text's partial re-editors and English translators (Ševčenko and Ševčenko 1984, p. 11). The argument is not certain—as noted elsewhere, hagiographers often claimed to be disciples of their saints and the provision of detail does not guarantee authenticity—but an early date for the text remains plausible, given, for instance, its hostility to the saint's brother, which would be difficult to explain in a later *Life*. The transmission of the text was complicated by the fact that Nicholas of Sion was, from a fairly early date, confused with the famous early Christian bishop Nicholas of Myra: on this, and other problems in the textual tradition, see Anrich 1913–17, II, pp. 210–14. I have used the version of the text published by the Ševčenkos, which, as they discuss (Ševčenko and Ševčenko 1984, p. 17), is largely that of Anrich 1913–17, I, pp. 3–65, but with various corrections and emendations.

[11] In fact the case for the text being a compilation seems stronger for the *Life of Nicholas* than for the *Life of Symeon*: not only are there various incidents related multiple times in different versions, and abrupt changes of narrative voice, but also on several occasions the narrative breaks off mid-account and jumps to an apparently unconnected episode. For polemic against the saint's brother Artemas, see *Life of Nicholas of Sion* 39 (pp. 66–8), 44–8 (pp. 74–80).

[12] Ibid. 44–6 (pp. 74–6).

[13] It is tempting to suggest that the author is here integrating into his text part of a sermon or writing by Nicholas himself (in a similar fashion to that in which, I have suggested, the author of the *Life of Symeon* used the stylite's sermons). Anrich was sceptical about this, preferring to see the use of the first person as a result of the author's fondness for vivid prose (Anrich 1913–17, II, pp. 217–18).

going to happen to the whole world, for the time of harvest is at hand, by the command of the Lord God; and He sent me to you, to give you tools for the harvest'.[14] Nicholas was terrified and questioned the angel, who repeated that he was going to give him a sickle to seal up the harvest for God. At this point:

> I drew near to the angel, to see the tools, and I saw, as it were, three sickles, five cubits in width, and fifteen cubits in length and I touched the three sickles. And I said to my brother: 'Come here, brother, let us give him three "blessings" [*eulogiai*].' And he said to me: 'Why do you want us to give him blessings?' And he grumbled. And the servant of God said to him: 'You do not want us to give him three blessings? Truly, he will take two doves as well, and so be on his way.'[15]

After this brief return to the third-person narrative voice, the first-person narration resumes again: Nicholas reports that he woke up, urged his brother to sing psalms with him, and told him about his vision, stating, 'I saw that the world was about to end, and that the Lord required this to be sealed up through my hand'.[16] Several days later he saw a frightening vision of the altar tilting to the side, and water pouring through the ceiling into the church. A week afterwards, the archangel Michael came to explain his visions, telling him that the angel he saw:

> was sent to reveal to you what is about to come to the world, and how the souls of men will be given over to the holy men, and how the holy men will offer them to God. And it was given to you to pray for these souls that will be given over from Lycia.[17]

He then clarifies further: 'the mortality [plague] has arrived like a harvest. For the harvest is the mortality coming to the race of men before the end of the world.'[18]

The narrative then returns to the third person, becoming less apocalyptic and more matter of fact. The author reports that the plague (still called 'the mortality', although a subsequent reference to the 'bubonic' disease makes its nature clear) started within forty days, in the city of Myra, and that local farmers were so afraid of the disease that they refused to go to the city, resulting in famine. A rumour broke out in Myra that Nicholas had forbidden the farmers from going to the city, so the governors and archbishop of Myra sent clergymen to Nicholas to arrest him. Some local villagers urged Nicholas not to go to the city, 'for there is much wrath in the city because of you'.[19] At this point, without explaining how Nicholas avoided arrest, how the plague developed and ended, or how the visions recounted

[14] *Life of Nicholas of Sion* 47 (ed. and trans. pp. 78–9).
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid. 48 (ed. and trans. pp. 78–81).
[17] Ibid. 50 (ed. and trans. pp. 82–3).
[18] Ibid. 51 (ed. and trans. pp. 82–3).
[19] Ibid. 53 (ed. and trans. pp. 84–5).

by Nicholas were fulfilled, the narrative abruptly shifts to describing Nicholas travelling around to local shrines and performing sacrifices and processions; the plague plays no further role in the text.

Here again we find a hagiographer struggling to deal with a major disaster that posed a severe threat to his saint's reputation. The importance of the plague is indicated by the eschatological tone of the visions announcing it; the saint and the archangel Michael both refer to it as heralding the end of the world.[20] The description of events in Myra, and the attempts to arrest Nicholas, show how greatly the disaster threatened the saint, prompting not only scepticism about his thaumaturgic powers, but also criticism of his social influence. Nicholas himself seems to have been scapegoated by certain authorities within the city. Like the author of the *Life of Symeon*, Nicholas's hagiographer adopts several strategies to try to combat this hostility. First, in a manner recalling the scapegoating of Angoulas in the *Life of Symeon*, he shifts blame for part of the disaster onto the saint's brother, Artemas.[21] Here the saint's vision, in which Artemas refused to give the scythe-bearing angel three *eulogiai*, and Nicholas says that as a result the angel will take two doves, is crucial. The fragmented nature of the narrative (probably the result of a clumsy process of compilation) means that the significance of this vision is never explained, and its realization never described. It seems almost certain, however, that in its original form the 'two doves' must have symbolized two special victims of the plague—quite possibly, although this must remain speculative, two monks from Nicholas's monastery. As the *Life of Symeon* revealed, holy men faced especial challenges when they failed to protect their own disciples, and this could explain why the hagiographer named a scapegoat for these deaths in particular.

Yet the hagiographer also adopts a more general framework to explain the outbreak of the plague and the role of the holy man within it: angels repeatedly tell Nicholas that it is the time of the harvest and that the holy men must harvest the souls with scythes, 'seal' the harvest, and deliver the souls to God. The image of the eschatological harvest derives from the New Testament, where it occurs in both the Gospel of Matthew (13:36–43) and the Book of Revelation (14:14–20). In the Gospel text, the reaping is performed by the angels; in Revelation, by both angels and Christ himself. Nicholas's hagiographer attempts to give holy men a role in this eschatological drama, by making an angel distribute scythes to the saints (the claim that Nicholas had the responsibility for the souls from Lycia implies that other holy men in other areas were performing the same task).

This model gives a completely different role to the holy man from that found in the *Life of Symeon*. There, when there was a tension between God's will and the safety of the people, the saint was presented firmly as representing the latter; he

[20] Ibid. 48 line 6 (pp. 78), 51 line 9 (p. 82).

[21] Cf. Efthymiadis et al. 2011, p. 70 n. 91.

repeatedly urged God to change his mind and never accepted the infliction of disasters without protesting. When an earthquake is about to hit Syria, Symeon sees angels in a boat about to hurl themselves against the coast; they, the 'angels of wrath', are the executors of God's judgement, while he is an unwilling bystander.[22] In the *Life of Nicholas*, in contrast, although the saint is very afraid and upset by what he has seen, he makes no attempt to change God's mind. By receiving a scythe, he himself takes the place of the angel and becomes the executor of God's command. Thus, even though Nicholas's hagiographer uses some of the same techniques as Symeon's, including the displacement of blame onto a disliked scapegoat, he displays a markedly different theological interpretation both of events and of the holy man's position between God and earth. The text does, however, exhibit many of the same tensions as the *Life of Symeon* and shows how far a holy man's reputation could be threatened by disasters afflicting his neighbourhood.

These signs of tension and crisis become still clearer in a hagiographic text written in the second quarter of the seventh century, after the Persian invasions of the empire: the *Life of Theodore of Sykeon*. Theodore of Sykeon died in 613, and his Life seems to have been written by his disciple George in the mid-seventh century, between *c.*640 and 680.[23] Theodore therefore died when Khosrow II's Persian armies were already making major inroads into Roman territory, although before the conquests of Jerusalem and Egypt, whereas the *Life* was written after much of the empire had already fallen to the Arab invaders. The later parts of the *Life* are suffused with ominous warnings about the coming crises. Thus George recounts that once when Theodore was making the eucharistic oblation, steam rose from the bread even though it was stale; the patrician Photios asked the saint what this signified, whereupon Theodore explained that 'the grace of the saints is drawing back and returning from us into the heavens, because of our unworthiness and our sins, so that our state will experience many afflictions and dangers'.[24] This seems in itself to be an *apologia* for the failure of saintly intercessors, living or dead, to prevent the coming military disasters; the grace of the saints was being drawn back to God because of the empire's great sinfulness.

[22] *ἄγγελοι ὀργῆς*: *Life of Symeon* 104 (p. 83).

[23] The date of Theodore's death is given by his hagiographer: *Life of Theodore of Sykeon* 170 (I, p. 161). For the dating of the text, we have a terminus post quem of October 640: George says that Theodore's prediction that Heraclius would reign for thirty years came true, implying he was writing at earliest in the thirtieth year of Heraclius's reign, 640–1 (*Life of Theodore* 166 (I, p. 154)). There is a fairly certain terminus ante quem of 680: even if one does not accept George's claim that he was a disciple of Theodore, he was probably writing before the Third Council of Constantinople in 680–1, which condemned patriarch Sergios of Constantinople as a heretic; George is extremely favourable to the patriarch (see esp. ibid. 136 (I, pp. 108–9)). A date around or shortly after Heraclius's death in 641 seems most plausible.

[24] *ἡ γὰρ χάρις τῶν ἁγίων συστέλλεται καὶ ἀνέρχεται ἀφ' ἡμῶν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς διὰ τὴν ἀναξιότητα καὶ τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν, πρὸς τὸ πειραθῆναι τὴν πολιτείαν ἡμῶν πολλῶν θλίψεων καὶ κινδύνων*: *Life of Theodore of Sykeon* 127 (I, pp. 102–3; my translation).

During processions in the nearby towns and villages, the crosses carried by the participants started to leap around of their own accord; Theodore predicted that this too signified great dangers approaching the world.[25] During a visit by Theodore to Constantinople, the patriarch, Thomas, anxiously asked the saint if the stories about the jumping crosses were true, and, if so, what they foretold. Theodore was reluctant to reply but, when pressed, provided the interpretation:

> The shaking of the crosses portends many painful and dangerous things for us—it means woe and apostasy in our faith, and the inroads of many barbarous peoples, and the shedding of much blood, and destruction and captivity throughout the whole world, the desolation of the holy churches, the cessation of the divine service of praise, the fall and instability of the empire and perplexity and critical times for the State; and further it foreshadows that the coming of the Adversary is at hand.[26]

This eschatological prophecy (which echoes other eschatological predictions from Heraclius's reign) almost certainly refers not only to the Persian invasions, but also to the subsequent Islamic conquests that must have been in the forefront of the hagiographer's mind.[27]

The rest of the *Life* continues this ominous tone: patriarch Thomas asks Theodore to pray for him to die before the catastrophes occur, and is replaced by Sergios, who protests his unworthiness for the role. Theodore tells Sergios that it is precisely because he is so young that God has chosen him as patriarch, so that he will be able to endure the terrible trials to come.[28] After his return to his monastery in Galatia, Theodore reassures the general Priskos that the rumours he had heard that Caesarea in Cappadocia was being starved in a siege by the Persians were false, but then warns that if the Romans failed to repent and appease God's wrath, the Persians would return with a great army and destroy all the land up to the sea. He then states that he trusts in God that while he is alive, God will not let the barbarians attack his homeland; George comments that this indeed turned out to be the case.[29] This, then, provides a useful defensive argument for the hagiographer: it was only after the saint's death that the worst incursions of the Persians took place, and therefore he could claim that his saintliness had held back the disasters for a while.

Nonetheless, the hagiographer does resort at times to more directly exculpatory tactics. Thus he recounts a story in which Heraclius visited the saint on his way to prepare a campaign against the Persians. Theodore embraced the emperor, prayed

[25] Ibid. 127 (I, p. 103). [26] Ibid. 134 (I, p. 106, trans. pp. 176–7).
[27] On eschatology under Heraclius (especially in connection with the Persian war), see e.g. Reinink 2002; Stoyanov 2011, pp. 55–71.
[28] George of Sykeon, *Life of Theodore of Sykeon* 136 (I, pp. 108–9). [29] Ibid. 153 (I, pp. 123–4).

that God would protect him, gave him gifts of bread, apples, and wine, and offered to serve him dinner. Yet Heraclius, in a hurry, rejected the offer of dinner and asked him to keep the gifts for him to collect on his return. After the emperor left, Theodore was distressed that he had not taken the gifts, and told his monks:

> If he had taken them, this would have been a proof of his victory and he would have returned in joy. His leaving them is a sign of our defeat, and if he had not come and received the prayer of the saints, then this misfortune would have reached to him and to all of us.[30]

The hagiographer tries simultaneously to exculpate Theodore of guilt for Heraclius's military defeat, by laying the responsibility on the emperor's failure to take the gifts, and to suggest that the saint's prayers had had some positive impact: if Heraclius had not visited him at all, he and the entire empire would have been lost.[31]

George of Sykeon's task in writing was made somewhat easier by the fact that military disaster had not reached as far as Theodore's home province by the time of his death. As the *Life of Symeon* shows, disasters which took place near the saint's own person posed particular challenges to his authority. Seventh-century hagiographers writing about holy men who lived through the worst of the Persian invasions thus faced an extremely difficult task. There are not in fact many full-length saints' Lives set in the eastern empire in this period, perhaps for this very reason. But the extraordinary lengths to which hagiographers could go in tackling these disasters are brought out with exceptional clarity in a short saint's Life written after the early 630s: the *Life of George of Choziba*.[32]

George, from the monastery of Choziba, near Jericho, lived through the Persian invasion of Palestine, which included perhaps the most emotionally devastating event of the entire war: the fall of Jerusalem in 614.[33] The hagiographer blamed these disasters firmly on the sins of the people, and, in particular, on their recourse

[30] *ἐὰν ἔλαβεν αὐτάς, τεκμήριον ἦν τῆς νίκης αὐτοῦ καὶ μετὰ χαρᾶς ὑπέστρεφεν· τὸ δὲ καταλιπεῖν αὐτὸν ταύτας σημεῖόν ἐστι τῆς ἥττας ἡμῶν, καὶ εἰ μὴ ὅτι ἀνῆλθεν καὶ ἔλαβεν τὴν εὐχὴν τῶν ἁγίων, ἐπεὶ καὶ μέχρις αὐτοῦ εἶχεν φθάσαι καὶ εἰς πάντας ἡμᾶς τὸ τοιοῦτον πένθος*: ibid. 166 (I, p. 154).

[31] On this passage see Dal Santo 2012, pp. 214–16.

[32] The *Life of George of Choziba* has been dated to 631 by Binns on the grounds that it refers to the patriarch of Jerusalem as Modestus, who served in this position only briefly in 631: Binns 1996, p. 54. Vivian, in his English translation of the *Life*, seems to accept this argument, as he dates it to 631, without explanation (Vivian 1996, p. 53). This dating is problematic, however, as the text merely refers to an event taking place 'in the time of our blessed father Modestus, patriarch of the holy city of Christ our God' (*ἐπὶ τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Μοδέστου, πατριάρχου τῆς ἁγίας Χριστοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν πόλεως*) (Antony of Choziba, *Life of George of Choziba* (p. 115)), which does not guarantee that Modestus was still patriarch at the time that the hagiographer was writing. Modestus's patriarchate (the dates of which are, in any case, uncertain), thus serves only as a terminus post quem for the composition of the *Life*; its real date remains unknown.

[33] On the ideological impact of the fall of Jerusalem, see Flusin 1992, II, esp. pp. 129–49; Booth 2014, pp. 94–100.

to sorcerers, implying that this constituted idolatry. Thus, when a wrestler, Epiphanios, who had been afflicted by a demon after consulting a sorcerer, came to Choziba to seek George's help, George launched into a passionate discourse to the brothers:

> Look, dear friends, at what Christians do! Woe to this world because of its scandalous acts.... Although supposedly called Christians, we submit to the yoke of the enemy of Christ: some become sorcerers, while others seek out help from them! What fellowship does light have with darkness, what agreement does the temple of God have with an idol, or what agreement is there between Christ and Belial?... How, therefore, can God not be angry at our people? How can he not turn his face away from the evil generation that does these things? Who will persuade him not to bring cataclysm on the earth or once again rain down fire and brimstone, burning up the earth like Sodom and Gomorrha?[34]

This, by itself, recalls Symeon's hagiographer's blaming of the idolatry of the Antiochenes for the Persian sack of 540. But George's hagiographer (apparently his disciple Antony) continues to adopt a very different approach from that found in Symeon's Life. We have already seen that hagiographers could take varying lines when handling the difficult question of the saint's response to God's decision to punish humanity. Thus Symeon repeatedly protested against God's decisions, urging him to change his mind, whereas Nicholas of Sion reluctantly acquiesced with God's plans and even became an agent of his wrath. George of Choziba, according to Antony, went still further: he actively urged God to punish his people. Thus, we are told, when the Persians had conquered land up to Damascus, George was praying to God to be merciful, but heard a voice telling him to go down to Jericho to see the actions of men. When he arrived, he saw over the city a crowd of 'Indians' fighting with each other, and told the brothers he was with to flee. At this point:

> The old man returned to his cell, and he bewailed and mourned the people's confusion, or rather their ignorance and impiety. He then went outside and sat on the rock... and called upon God and implored him, saying, 'Lord God of mercies and Lord of pity, you who wish everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of truth, take up your staff and smite this people, for they walk in

[34] *Βλέπετε, ἀγαπητοί, τί ποιοῦσιν οἱ χριστιανοί. Οὐαὶ τῷ κόσμῳ τούτῳ ἀπὸ τῶν σκανδάλων... Χριστιανοὶ δῆθεν λεγόμενοι, καὶ τῷ ἐχθρῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὑποκύπτομεν, οἱ μὲν γινόμενοι μάγοι, οἱ δὲ παρ' αὐτῶν βοήθειαν ἐπιζητοῦντες. Τίς κοινωνία φωτὶ πρὸς σκότος, τίς δὲ συγκατάθεσις ναῷ Θεοῦ μετὰ εἰδώλου, ἢ τίς συμφωνία Χριστοῦ πρὸς Βελίαρ;... Πῶς οὖν μὴ ὀργιασθῇ ὁ Θεὸς ἐπὶ τὸ γένος ἡμῶν; Πῶς μὴ ἀποστρέψῃ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς πονηρᾶς γενεᾶς τῆς ποιούσης ταῦτα; Τίς δὲ καὶ δυσωπήσει αὐτὸν μὴ ἐπαγαγεῖν κατακλυσμὸν ἔτι τῷ κόσμῳ, ἢ πάλιν ὑετὸν πυρὸς καὶ θείου, καταφλέγων τὴν γῆν ὡς Σόδομα καὶ Γόμορρα*: Antony of Choziba, *Life of George of Choziba* 18 (pp. 116–17, trans. pp. 84–5 with small changes by me).

> ignorance'. And suddenly he saw a fiery staff stretching in the sky from the Holy City to Bostra. And the holy man knew that the people would be severely disciplined. And he bewailed and mourned everything.[35]

The saint is thus actually presented as calling for the Persian attacks to worsen. In this moment of crisis, George abandons the traditional role of the holy man, that of intercessor for a people, however sinful, instead demanding that they should be chastised. No story can better show how severely challenged holy men and hagiographers were by the disasters of the early seventh century.

This is not to argue that the crises of the sixth and seventh centuries *created* scepticism towards and criticism of holy men. Far from it: there had always been a conceptual problem surrounding the idea of saint as mediator between God and man.[36] So too there had always been sceptics about some forms of miracle-working, ranging from theologically minded clerics who were averse to anything that might bear the taint of paganism to ordinary lay Christians who observed that the saints sometimes made very human mistakes.[37] The holy man had never been accepted unquestioningly by Byzantine society. But it is to argue that widespread societal crisis crystallized these concerns, gave fodder to the saints' critics, and ensured that the debate had far greater emotional and ideological significance.

Context for Crisis: Heightened Expectations of Holy Men

Holy men had in fact by this period become particularly vulnerable to accusations of failure in times of disaster because of ideological developments across late antiquity. Two related developments were key: first, rising expectations of the miracle-working powers of saints, and second, the growing association between holy men and the empire. In the earliest saints' Lives, from the fourth century, hagiographers are often quite cautious about miracles, and avoid overstating the capabilities of their saints. Admittedly, not all hagiographers are equally restrained: Gregory of Nyssa in his *Life of Gregory Thaumatourgos* places rather more emphasis on the miraculous than some of his contemporaries, although his claims are still less extravagant than those found in many later saints' Lives.[38] But in the foundational texts of Christian monastic hagiography we find explicit acknowledgements of limitations on holy men's thaumaturgic powers.

[35] Ibid. 30 (p. 129, trans. p. 92). On this passage, cf. Booth 2014, p. 100.

[36] Cf. above pp. 152–6, and Dal Santo 2012, p. 181.

[37] On Christian scepticism towards holy men, see Dagron 1992; Dal Santo 2011a and 2012, esp. pp. 149–236; Sarris 2011c.

[38] It should be noted that the epithet 'Thaumatourgos', Wonder-Worker, was not used by Gregory of Nyssa himself for his subject; it does not seem to have been employed until the fifth century: see Slusser 1998, p. 1 (with n. 1). Rowan Greer has discerned some signs of tension in Gregory of Nyssa's own attitude to miracles: Greer 1989, pp. 108–11.

Thus Athanasios in his *Life of Antony* states that the holy man did not expect to have his every request granted by God, and that he did not become angry if he failed to perform a miracle: '[Antony] would suffer with those who suffered, and pray for them, and often the Lord hearkened to him concerning many of them. He was neither boastful when he was heard, nor did he grumble when he was not heard, but always gave thanks to the Lord.'[39] Athanasios's generally ambivalent attitude towards miracles in the text may in part reflect his role as bishop: as a representative of ecclesiastical authority he may have been suspicious of the charismatic powers ascribed to holy men.[40] Yet similarly limited expectations are found in the Bohairic *Life of Pachomios*, a work usually thought to be of monastic rather than clerical origin: the hagiographer reports, probably inspired by the *Life of Antony*, 'the Lord did many other healings through [Pachomios]. But if he prayed over someone for his healing and was not granted his request by the Lord, he was not afflicted at not being heard. On the contrary his prayer was always, "Lord, may your will be done."'[41] As long as expectations of miracle working were kept this low, and God's overriding will was always emphasized, holy men were much less vulnerable to criticism in times of disaster.

Yet these caveats about the limitations of saints' abilities soon disappear from most hagiography, and expectations of the scope and efficacy of their miracles become increasingly great. By the sixth and seventh centuries, we even find holy men becoming angry when God refuses to accept their prayers, in sharp contrast to the equanimity in the face of failure praised by Antony and Pachomios's hagiographers. This contrast can perhaps best be illustrated by a comparison of reactions to outbreaks of disease within saints' monasteries. An epidemic hit Pachomios's monastic confederation towards the end of the saint's lifetime. Many senior monks, including the abbots of some of the monasteries, died, yet Pachomios neither healed any of the monks nor seemed to be expected to. He displayed his holiness simply by refusing any special treatment when he too fell ill.[42] The epidemic is described in sorrowful, but matter of fact terms, and is apparently a natural phenomenon.

This could hardly contrast more strongly with Symeon the Younger's presentation of plague within his monastery, as discussed above; in this late sixth-/seventh-century source, the plague is presented as a manifestation of the Devil's

[39] Athanasios, *Life of Antony* 56 (p. 286, trans. p. 179).

[40] For Athanasios's ambivalent attitude towards miracles, see also e.g. ibid. 31–8 (pp. 220–38). On his ecclesiastical suspicion of charismatic powers, see esp. M. A. Williams 1982b, esp. pp. 33–40.

[41] Bohairic *Life of Pachomios* 45 (p. 48, trans. pp. 68–9). The dating of the various versions of the Life of Pachomios is very difficult to establish: all probably contain fourth-century material, but with later accretions: see e.g. Goehring 1982.

[42] This part of the *Life* is missing from the surviving Bohairic version of the text, but the gap can be filled by recourse to one of the surviving Sahidic versions (S^7): Sahidic *Lives of Pachomios* (pp. 91–2). (See Veilleux's discussion of the corpus: Veilleux 1980, pp. 1–18).

supernatural campaign against the saint.[43] The account of Symeon's resurrection of his beloved disciple Konon shows how far expectations of holy men had changed. When Konon dies of the plague, Symeon prays to God for his life to be restored. His initial prayers seem to have no effect, at which point, far from displaying the composed resignation idealized by Antony and Pachomios's hagiographers, he appears to grow angry and rebuke the heavens. He addresses the Virgin Mary, John the Baptist, and all the heavenly powers, saints, and martyrs, asking, 'Have your prayers for me fallen silent; have you forgotten my love? Where now is your sanctification? Where now is remembrance of me among your phalanxes?'.[44] He insists, 'If he does not live [again], I have toiled in vain; if he is not resurrected, I have not pleased the Lord nor earnt a share in the treasure house of his greatness in the heavens'.[45] The other monks are terrified, 'because it could be seen, from these words, that the Heaven itself was almost frowning'.[46] Ultimately, Symeon's impassioned pleas are successful, and Konon is resurrected. The contrast between this account and that found in the *Life of Pachomios* reflects a great increase in the claims of hagiographers about their saints' powers: failure was no longer to be tolerated.

Later hagiographers also present their saints attempting and achieving more ambitious miracles than we find in the fourth century. Fourth-century holy men normally performed miracles for individuals or small local groups who came to visit the saint in person (or occasionally through representatives). Many later saints, however, are described performing miracles for whole cities, or for people in distant lands: thus the fifth-century Syriac *Life of Symeon Stylites the Elder* states 'for what mouth could tell or recount about the miracles and glorious deeds which our Lord performed through him, not only nearby, but also far away, and at sea, and among the pagans, and among the Magians, worshippers of fire and water?'.[47] The sixth-century *Life of Severos* depicts its hero as guardian of the city of Antioch and its people against all disasters: 'in times of drought, dearth of rain, rapacious pestilences, and the irruption of demonic attacks, like Moses he would stand against the wrath of God, appeasing Him by [his] intercessions for all the people.'[48] These highly ambitious claims about what holy men could achieve, together with the refusal to accept they might fail in their requests, undoubtedly had the potential to increase the influence and status of saints' cults, and to attract more worshippers. Some saints may well have capitalized on disasters to bolster

[43] See above pp. 156–61.

[44] *ἐσιγήσατε δεόμενοι ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ, ἐπελάθεσθέ μου τῆς ἀγάπης*; *Ποῦ νῦν ὁ ἁγιασμὸς ὑμῶν*; *Ποῦ νῦν ἡ μνήμη μου ἐν τοῖς συντάγμασιν ὑμῶν*; *Life of Symeon* 129 (p. 118).

[45] *εἰ οὐ ζήσεται, εἰς μάτην ἐκοπίασα· εἰ οὐκ ἀναστήσεται, οὐκ εὐηρέστησα τῷ Κυρίῳ οὐδὲ κοινωνίαν εὗρον εἰς τὸν ἐν οὐρανοῖς θησαυρὸν τῆς μεγαλωσύνης*: ibid. 129 (p. 118).

[46] *ἦν γὰρ ἰδεῖν ἐκ τῶν λεγομένων αὐτὸν σχεδὸν τὸν οὐρανὸν στυγνάζοντα*: ibid. 129 (p. 118).

[47] ܐܢܫ ܠܝܬ ܗܘܦܟ ܡܥܓܒ ܘܒܐܝܢ ܐܘ ܒܥܐܝ ܟܠ ܐܢܐ ܕܐܡܪ ܡܢ ܦܘܡܐ ܕܐܢܫ ܕܝܢ ܕܥܒܕ ܢܣܝܢ ܘܒܝܡܐ ܘܒܒܚܪ̈ܐ ܘܒܡܓܘܫ̈ܐ ܘܒܟܠ ܐܝܡܡ̈ܐ ܘܒܟܠ ܒܢ̈ܝ ܐܢ̈ܫ ܕܐܠܗ̈ܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ ܘܒܐܪ̈ܥܐ ܕܥܒܕ ܢܣ̈ܐ ܘܦ̈ܠܚ̈ܐ ܘܡ̈ܬܩ̈ܢ̈ܐ ܘܡ̈ܬ̈ܐ ܘܡ̈ܬ̈ܐ ܕܚ̈ܝ̈ܐ ܘܡ̈ܬ̈ܐ ܕܡ̈ܝ̈ܬ̈ܐ ܘܡ̈ܬ̈ܐ ܕܡ̈ܝ̈ܬ̈ܐ ܘܡ̈ܬ̈ܐ ܕܡ̈ܝ̈ܬ̈ܐ: Syriac Life of Symeon (pp. 594–5).

[48] *Life of Severus* (p. 245, trans. p. 127).

their reputations; disasters presented opportunities as well as challenges to holy people. But these ambitious claims also bore a potential downside: if the saints were always expected to achieve their requests, and defend large populations, they were much more vulnerable when they had clearly failed to do so.

In particular, military disasters for the empire became a threat to Byzantine holy men because of an increasing association, from the late fifth century onwards, between holy men and the security of the state. Fourth-century hagiographies generally display a reserved, or openly hostile, attitude towards the Roman emperors—perhaps unsurprisingly, given that the emperors in this period were either 'heretics' or pagans—and display no interest in the military successes or failures of the empire.[49] From the fifth century onwards, with the advent of 'orthodox' emperors, hagiographers engage more closely and favourably with imperial authorities, although they still play a limited role in comparison with later saints' Lives.[50] The Syriac *Life of Symeon Stylites the Elder* contains perhaps the first reference in a saint's Life to what becomes a crucial concept, the idea that the sanctity of holy men could protect the empire: thus it reports that Leo I tried to acquire the body of the saint for Constantinople, 'in order to honour it there with him as his endeavours deserved, *and in order for their kingdom to be protected by his prayers* [emphasis mine].'[51] Yet it is only with the *Life of Daniel the Stylite*, probably dating from the last decade of the fifth century, that the emperors become an important focus of interest in a holy *vita*.[52] It would be excessive to list all the forms of association between saint, emperor, and empire in the *Life*, but again the link between the power of the saint and the prosperity of the empire should be noted: Daniel reassures Leo that God has promised to preserve Alexandria and the emperor against Vandal attacks.[53]

In the sixth century, this connection between saint and state was thoroughly cemented, at least in the Chalcedonian tradition, to the extent that Helen Saradi has spoken of the appearance of the 'national saint'.[54] Certain tropes emerge: Eutychios of Constantinople, Symeon the Younger, and Theodore of Sykeon all

[49] e.g. Athanasios, *Life of Antony* 81 (pp. 340–4); see Brakke 1995, p. 247; Bohairic *Life of Pachomios* 101 (pp. 125–8), 185 (pp. 164–8); Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Gregory Thaumatourgos* (pp. 44–5). On Athanasios's attitude towards the political authorities in the *Life of Antony*, see Cartwright 2016.

[50] See e.g. Kallinikos, *Life of Hypatios* 37 (pp. 227–9).

[51] ܘܢܝܩܪ ܠܗܘܢ ܢܝܩܪܘܢܝܗܝ: ܐܝܟ ܕܫܘܐ ܥܢܝܢܘܗܝ: ܘܕܢܬܢܛܪ ܡܠܟܘܬܗܘܢ ܒܨܠܘܬܗ.: Syriac *Life of Symeon* (p. 643).

[52] On the extraordinary relationship of the saint and the emperor in the *Life of Daniel*, see Miller 1970; Lane-Fox 1997, pp. 178–9, 205; and esp. Trampedach 2013, pp. 189–207.

[53] *Life of Daniel* 56 (p. 55); on the historical context, see Lane Fox 1997, pp. 190–1.

[54] Saradi 1995, 102. The picture is, unsurprisingly, more complex in miaphysite hagiography, where holy men are sometimes depicted criticizing emperors' religious policies, as in John of Ephesus's Lives of Zʿura and Mare the Solitary (*Lives of the Eastern Saints* 2 (I, pp. 18–35), 36 (II, pp. 624–41))—though it should be noted that John's attitude towards Justinian is far from uniformly hostile, and he often tries to show that his holy men did achieve influence over him. For a study of John's treatment of emperors (although focusing particularly on his *Ecclesiastical History*), see Van Ginkel 1994.

predicted the accessions of one or more emperors.[55] Symeon the Younger healed Justin II's daughter of demonic possession;[56] Theodore of Sykeon cured Maurice's child of 'an incurable disease'.[57] Above all, crucially, the association between saint and the security of the state grew ever stronger. Thus in Cyril of Scythopolis's influential *Life of Sabas* Justinian is said to have offered patronage to his monasteries in the desert, 'so that they may pray for the state entrusted to our care'; Sabas also tells Justinian that if the emperor fulfils the saint's requests he will regain Africa, Rome, and the rest of the lost provinces.[58] Theodosios, in his Life by Theodore of Petra, gives the *magister militum per Orientem* his hairskin vest as a phylactery on his way to campaign against the Persians; the general achieves a victory 'so brilliant and so useful to the universality of the whole Roman state'.[59] Symeon the Younger, in his letter to Justin II, promises that if Justin follows his advice to punish Samaritan violators of a church harshly, God will bless and glorify his reign 'beyond all former realms'.[60] Theodore of Sykeon is particularly closely implicated with the military fate of the empire. As mentioned above, Heraclius seeks Theodore's prayers when on his way to fight the Persians. Theodore also heals the important patrician Niketas of a sickness rumoured to have been caused by poison, telling him, 'Get up, my son, for it is the hour of toil and our government/state has need of you'.[61] He even prays for various important members of the subsequently reviled regime of Phokas, although his hagiographer makes him warn both the 'savage consul' Bonosos and Phokas himself that their wicked deeds are likely to prevent God from favouring them with success.[62]

In the early seventh century we even see the development of hagiography as imperial, patriotic, propaganda, as seen in the rewritings of the Lives of Golindouch and Anastasios the Persian by, respectively, Eustratios Presbyter

[55] Eutychios predicts the accessions of Justin II, Tiberius, and Maurice (*Life of Eutychios*, lines 1842–1945 (pp. 60–3)); Symeon that of Justin II (*Life of Symeon*, 202–3, (pp. 176–7)) (Evagrios Scholastikos also claims that Symeon had foretold the accession of Maurice: V.21 (p. 217)); Theodore predicts the accession of Maurice (George of Sykeon, *Life of Theodore of Sykeon* 54 (I, pp. 46–7)).

[56] *Life of Symeon* 207 (pp. 178–9).

[57] George of Sykeon, *Life of Theodore of Sykeon* 97 (I, p. 79, trans. p. 153).

[58] Cyril of Scythopolis, *Life of Sabas* (p. 175, trans. pp. 184–5). Neary has argued that this language reflected Justinian's own monastic legislation: Neary 2017, pp. 126, 136–7.

[59] *Τῆς οὕτω λαμπρᾶς καὶ κοινωφελοῦς τοῦ παντὸς Ῥωμαίων πολιτεύματος*: Theodore of Petra, *Life of Theodosios* (pp. 83–5, quote at p. 85).

[60] *ὑπὲρ πάσας τὰς ἔμπροσθεν βασιλείας*. Symeon Stylites the Younger, 'Letter to Justin II', col. 3217. On this letter see above pp. 111–12.

[61] *ἀνάστηθι, τέκνον, ὅτι καιρὸς καμάτου ἐστὶν καὶ χρήζει σου τὸ πολίτευμα ἡμῶν*: George of Sykeon, *Life of Theodore of Sykeon* 154 (I, p. 125).

[62] *ἀνήμερος ὕπατος*: ibid. 142 (I, p. 111). Theodore saved Phokas's nephew, Domnitziolos, from a Persian ambush, and prayed and predicted successfully that his wife would bear three children: ibid. 120 and 140 (I, pp. 96–7, 110–11); he healed Phokas himself of an illness, although was more equivocal when asked to pray for his regime (133 (I, pp. 105–6)); he prayed for, but also rebuked, Bonosos (142 (I, pp. 111–13)).

and George of Pisidia.[63] This last development reflects an important fact: the association between holy men and empire does not seem to have been created only by hagiographers seeking to boost the prestige of their saints, and to win patronage, but was also encouraged by the imperial government itself to strengthen and legitimize its authority.[64] This identification of holy men and empire worked in the favour of both in times of peace and prosperity. Yet, inevitably, it meant that if the defences of the empire failed—as they did, spectacularly, in the seventh century—the protective powers of the saints became extremely vulnerable to criticism. Eustratios Presbyter's *Life of Golindouch*, written in the last months of Maurice's reign, reveals particularly clearly how quickly a hagiographer's claims about his saint's powers could be disproven: Eustratios describes Golindouch praying on her deathbed for Maurice's success and prosperity, yet, within a year, Maurice had been overthrown by Phokas and the empire was facing disaster.[65]

Again, therefore, it is clear that long-term ideological developments underlay the crisis in sanctity reflected in hagiography of this period. As hagiographers attributed more ambitious roles to their saints, depicting them as the mainstays of the empire and the defenders of the Christian people, they also faced a greater risk of embarrassment if their saints had clearly failed to fulfil their goals. It was in the late sixth and seventh centuries that expectations of holy men's miracle-working reached their peak, and in the same period that holy men were most closely identified with the empire and its success. As a result, the disasters of the period—the sixth-century plague, severe earthquakes in some locations, and above all the destructive wars with the Persians and the Arabs which resulted in serious losses to the empire—posed an exceptionally strong challenge to holy men's claims to authority to which some hagiographers, at least, clearly felt obliged to respond.

Miracle Collections

Was this sense of crisis confined to the biographies of living holy men? At the same time that some saints' Lives evince the kinds of tension just described, another hagiographic genre was flourishing: the miracle collections of long-dead

[63] On the strongly pro-imperial line of Eustratios's version of the *Life of Golindouch*, see Dal Santo 2011b. George of Pisidia's reworking of the *Life of Anastasios* has yet to receive a detailed study, but does seem to reflect Heraclian propaganda: it contains—unlike its Palestinian source—aggressive attacks on Khosrow II (see e.g. 5 (p. 209), 35 (p. 245)), a military-religious ethos (see e.g. 18 (pp. 225–7)), and a possible effort to associate the saint with the emperor through imagery (ibid. 45 (p. 255), 47 (p. 257)).

[64] On Justinian, see Neary 2017, p. 126; for the later sixth-century empire, see esp. A. M. Cameron 1979 and Dal Santo 2012, pp. 321–4.

[65] *Life of Golindouch* 24 (pp. 171–2). In terms of the dating of the text, the *Life* must have been written after 12 January 602, the death of Bishop Domitian of Melitene, but before the revolt of Phokas late in the same year (Peeters 1944, pp. 81, 91).

martyrs. Only one such collection survives in Greek from before this period: the miracles of the cult of Thekla at Seleucia in Isauria, written in the fifth century by a maverick ex-member of the clergy of her shrine, who had been excommunicated by local bishops.[66] But numerous miracle collections have survived from the late sixth and seventh centuries, including, from Constantinople, the several miracle collections of Cosmas and Damian, the *Miracles of Artemios*, and the *Miracles of Therapon*; from Menouthis in Egypt, Sophronios of Jerusalem's *Miracles of Cyrus and John*; and from Thessaloniki, the two series of the *Miracles of St Demetrios*.[67] The relationship between this genre of hagiography, and the saint's Life, is complex, but despite important differences the two undoubtedly share certain key concepts and concerns.[68] Some texts cross the boundaries between the genres, including, as argued above, the *Life of Martha*. We thus might expect to find in the miracle collections attempts to counter tension and scepticism provoked by natural and military disasters, similar to those found in the saints' Lives mentioned above. But is this the case?

The miracle collections of this period do display certain signs of tension, and seem keen to rebut potential critics of the miracle-working powers of their saints. This phenomenon has in fact been studied more thoroughly than responses to crises in holy *vitae*, by Vincent Déroche and Matthew Dal Santo. Dal Santo focuses on the evidence in the texts of widespread scepticism about the possibility of posthumous intercession, while Déroche shows that many of the hagiographers struggled to reconcile the saint's duty to his supplicants with that towards God, and often as a result show the martyr resisting God's commands and messengers.[69] Both suggest that these tensions are similar to those displayed in the *Life of Symeon*; indeed, both count the *Life* as one of these miracle collections (a view which I have challenged above).[70] Neither, however, gives a central place to the disasters of the period when discussing these tensions. Déroche argues that they were caused by the particular process of compilation of miracle collections.[71] Dal Santo does at various points suggest that the manifold difficulties facing the empire in the period may have encouraged the debates he describes, but this is not the focus of his attention, and he does not always explore the theme when discussing individual texts, even the *Life of Symeon*.[72] While in the *Life of*

[66] On the text's author, see Dagron 1978, pp. 13–16. On the *Miracles* as a whole, see also Johnson 2006b.

[67] On the emergence of miracle collections in this period, see e.g. A. M. Cameron 1991a, pp. 211–12.

[68] Both, of course, are generally concerned with cult promotion, but they also seem to respond to similar ideological currents and even, sometimes, particular debates: see Dal Santo 2012, pp. 149–236 (though he notes, rightly, that we must be cautious when drawing links between texts with very different backgrounds).

[69] Déroche, 2000, pp. 145–54; Dal Santo 2012, ch. 3.

[70] See above p. 114.

[71] A view which I have argued against above p. 152.

[72] For references to disasters, see Dal Santo 2012, pp. 214, 216, 324–5.

Symeon this connection between disasters and scepticism and tension is clear, it is much harder to assess how far it is relevant in the case of the miracle collections.

It is a notable feature of the sixth- and seventh-century miracle collections (with one important exception, to be discussed shortly) that they are far more limited in scope than many contemporary saints' Lives. Thus—and this is where their similarities to the *Life of Martha* are most striking—they generally contain nothing about major events in the empire, or even in the city where they are set; rather their focus is entirely on their cult site and on the private lives of their supplicants. They also focus almost exclusively on healing miracles, including only the occasional other form of small-scale miracle: thus, for example, the miracles of Cosmas and Damian are overwhelmingly dominated by healing miracles, but contain one reference to a miracle of conversion with no healing attached, and another to the saints' miraculous procuring of a job for one of their supplicants.[73] So too forty-four of the forty-five miracles of Artemios deal with healing miracles (almost all of which relate to ailments of the male genitalia); just one recounts the saint's success in helping one of his devotees regain his stolen goods.[74]

Finally, their miracles almost always benefit only one (or sometimes two or three) supplicants; mass miracles for whole villages or cities are unknown. The saints are not presented as general protectors of whole regions, but as patrons of individuals who have turned to the saints and fulfilled the required conditions for healing (conditions which vary, sometimes relating to orthodox belief, sometimes simply to belief in the saints, and other times to particular ritual activities). All this means that disasters such as earthquakes and invasions are irrelevant to the preoccupations of these hagiographers; plague sometimes enters the accounts, but even then the hagiographers describe their saints healing particular victims of the disease rather than, like Symeon the Younger, attempting to avert the sickness from a whole area.[75] The genre of the miracle collection thus seems well suited to a time of crisis; the narrower horizons of these cults when compared to those of some holy men meant that their hagiographers did not have to deal with many of the challenges faced by the latter. It is particularly well suited because miracle collections, in comparison with saints' Lives, tend to place more responsibility for the successful performance of a miracle on the individual supplicant than on the

[73] *Miracles of Cosmas and Damian* 10 (pp. 117–21), 18 (pp. 144–9). In miracle 25 the saints also prove that a man's wife has not been unfaithful to him, but this story still contains a healing (pp. 164–6).

[74] *Miracles of Artemios* 18 (pp. 114–20).

[75] See e.g. ibid. 34 (pp. 176–82). The late seventh- or early eighth-century *Miracles of Therapon* might seem to be an exception to this rule, since the work contains, near its beginning, an account of the saint's relics being transferred from Cyprus to Constantinople to escape the second Arab attack on the island (Miracles 6–11 (pp. 123–6)); during this section the hagiographer does urge Therapon to protect the Christians from the barbarians (Miracles 10 (p. 125)). Yet once the author begins to recount the saint's miracles, again he focuses exclusively on healing miracles of small numbers of people, seemingly unrelated to the context of invasion (Miracles 12–24 (pp. 126–32)).

holy man or martyr; if a miracle does not take place it is the former who is to blame.[76]

The question remains of whether these characteristics of miracle collections are entirely coincidental, and unrelated to the crises, or whether these hagiographers were responding, consciously or unconsciously, to the pressures of the time by narrowing their claims about their saints' powers. It might be suggested that these limited horizons were somehow inherent to the genre of the miracle collection, or might reflect the realities of the incubation cults that produced them. Certainly collections like those of Cosmas and Damian and Cyrus and John do resemble in these respects the miracles recorded at the pagan cult of Asclepius.[77] Three texts, however, suggest that this is not a complete explanation for the phenomenon. The first is the *Miracles of Thekla*, which reveals that it was possible for a Christian miracle collection derived from the cult of an early martyr to be extremely ambitious in scope. Its fifth-century author certainly does not limit himself to recounting healing miracles or miracles benefiting individuals, instead presenting Thekla as the patron of the whole city, and even perhaps the empire, and as performer of a diverse range of miracles: 'the great martyr . . . often halted famine, put an end to plague, quenched drought, terminated war, handed over enemies, saved cities, protected houses, and gave out bountifully, to the collective and to each individual, the very things which each asked for.'[78] In the fifth century it was, apparently, possible to conceive of a long-deceased martyr fulfilling the role of a living holy man. The *Miracles of Thekla* show that a miracle collection could assign a deceased miracle-worker broad and ambitious powers; limitations were not a necessary generic trait of miracle collections.

The second relevant text is the *Life of Martha*. The *Life* seems to date from a similar time to the classic miracle collections such as those of Cyrus and John, Cosmas and Damian, and Artemios. But the *Life* is of a rather different type from these collections. In terms of structure, it cannot be categorized simply as a miracle collection; it transcends any straightforward classification of genre,

[76] Not only is the focus in miracle collections always on the individual supplicant—we perceive the saint through their eyes—but stress is usually laid on the need for the supplicant to approach the saint properly and to fulfil certain preconditions for healing; indeed, in some collections the healing is even presented as a reward, repayment, or as the 'fruit', of the supplicants' proper behaviour, as in Sophronios of Jerusalem's *Miracles of Cyrus and John* 1.12 (p. 246, '*μισθὸν εὐπρεπῆ*'), 2.3 (p. 247, '*καρπὸν*'), 15.5 (pp. 273–4, '*ἀντάλλαγμα*'), 19.3 (pp. 279–80, '*τιμὴ*'), 39.9 (p. 338, '*μισθὸν*'), 46.2 (p. 351, '*μισθὸν*'). The dramatic tension in the miracle collection thus revolves around whether the supplicant can persuade the saint to help him or her, whereas in a saint's Life, the crux of a healing story is the moment when the saint petitions God to help the supplicant. This is not an absolute difference, but one of emphasis (since, for example, in some saints' Lives supplicants are not healed because of their sins), but it is nonetheless significant.

[77] The relationship between Christian and pagan healing accounts, and cultic rites, has been discussed extensively: for some recent treatments, from various angles, see Csepregi 2002; Stewart 2004; Csepregi 2012; Graf 2014. Festugière 1973 has also discussed parallels between Asclepian miracles and some of the miracles recounted in the *Life of Symeon the Younger*.

[78] *Miracles of Thekla* 4 (ed. p. 296; trans. pp. 19–21).

combining elements from various hagiographic norms.[79] In addition, its author gives no indication that incubation was common at Martha's cult, and she was certainly not a long dead martyr. Despite these important differences, however, the author displays a similar focus on local, small-scale healing miracles to that of the authors of the more characteristic miracle collections. As discussed in the previous chapter, Martha's hagiographer seems to avoid ambitious claims about miracle-working powers, and shifts the responsibility for the success of miracles onto the proper behaviour of the supplicants, as in the more standard miracle collections. This suggests that there was more than simply generic or literary convention behind this hagiographic development; it seems rather to have reflected wider ideological changes in this period.

The final, and most important, text is, however, a seventh-century miracle collection of a long-deceased martyr (that is to say, a text sharing the key characteristics of collections like those of Cyrus and John and Artemios): the *Miracles of St Demetrios*. The *Miracles of Demetrios*, like the *Miracles of Thekla*, shows that martyr cults could advance ambitious and broad claims—but it also reveals that it was very risky to do so in the fraught climate of the late sixth and seventh centuries. The *Miracles of St Demetrios* is in many respects an extraordinary text. It is in fact a composite work, containing two series of miracles, the first apparently written by archbishop John of Thessaloniki, perhaps in the early years of Heraclius's reign, the second by an anonymous continuator at least some decades later.[80] Neither collection is remotely limited to healing miracles: in fact both are particularly preoccupied with the various sieges Thessaloniki experienced in this period at the hands of the Slavs and Avars. Demetrios is presented as the saviour of the city from plague, famine, earthquake, and these attacks.

In this case, therefore, we find a miracle collection which is very clearly affected by the disasters of the sixth and seventh centuries. Throughout the collection, as Déroche and Dal Santo have observed, there are signs of tension surrounding the thaumaturgic powers of the saint, his role as mediator between God and man, and indeed about divine providence and theodicy itself—all themes which were crucial

[79] Boero and Kuper 2020, pp. 402–3.

[80] For the first collection, this is the dating proposed by Lemerle 1979–81, II, pp. 40–4, 80, although he suggests that John may have drawn upon earlier records. Lemerle notes in particular that John refers to the reign of Phokas as 'the reign after that of Maurice, he of τῆς εὐσεβοῦς λήξεως βασιλείας' (Miracles of Demetrios, 82 (I, p. 112)), suggesting that this formula would make most sense under Heraclius. This seems suggestive but not definitive; nonetheless, a date during Heraclius's reign is likely, given that the miracles recounted seem to take place in the reigns of Maurice and Phokas, while the author of the later collection notes in his preface that John had failed to record the miracles that took place during his own episcopate (ibid. 176 (I, pp. 168–9)), implying that it succeeded the events recounted. For the second collection, the anonymous author states that, when recounting the events of John's episcopate, he was following in the footsteps of Zorobabel in writing about the captivity and return of the Jews seventy years after it took place, and Philon and Josephus in writing about events under Titus and Vespasian (ibid. 177 (I, p. 169)). Lemerle takes this to mean that he was writing approximately seventy years after John's episcopate; this may be taking the reference too literally, but it certainly suggests a period of some decades between the texts: Lemerle 1979–81, II, pp. 83–4.

in texts such as the *Life of Symeon the Younger*.[81] The first of these themes, doubts about the saint's capabilities, comes to the fore, for example, when John describes Demetrios's healing miracles during an outbreak of the plague in the city. The hagiographer produces arguments to try to refute both sceptics who thought that the healings simply took place by chance, and critics who accused the saint of 'impotence, hard-heartedness, or partiality'.[82] This trio of potential accusations is very important, as it shows that the hagiographer was caught in a delicate position: it was difficult to avoid either acknowledging that Demetrios did not have the power to heal everyone, or that he was choosing which of his supplicants were worthy of assistance. In this case, John tried to deal with the problem by stating that Demetrios was confined by the decisions of divine providence; he thus deflects the problem from Demetrios to God, without exploring the implications of this for the martyr's role as intercessor.

Elsewhere in the collection, however, John presents Demetrios as displaying a very different attitude to divine will: rather than accepting God's apparent decision to condemn the city, he resists it. Thus in one account an *illustris* has a vision in which two men dressed like imperial guards (almost certainly angels) went to Demetrios and told him to leave Thessaloniki because 'the master' (that is, God) had declared that it was going to be given over to enemies. Demetrios refused, saying that either the city would be saved, or he would die with its inhabitants. The angels tried to argue with him but could not change his mind.[83] The hagiographer thus, like Symeon the Younger's, firmly asserts Demetrios's ultimate loyalty to his dependent people, even to the extent of opposing God's expressed will.[84]

This choice implicitly raises the question of whether the saint in fact loved the Thessalonikans more than God did. John does not address this question directly, but throughout the collection he does repeatedly stress not only that Demetrios always helped the citizens, but also that God himself was protecting them and coming to their aid (rather in contradiction to the claim that God had ordered Demetrios to leave the city). Thus, for example, in miracle 14, describing a major siege of the city by the Avars, John recounts several miracles without stressing Demetrios's intercessory role; his focus is instead on proving that it was God who had saved the town. He provides various arguments to show that it must have been divine providence, rather than the Thessalonikans' bravery or the incompetence of the attackers, that had saved the city. He emphasizes, for example, that although the citizens had been almost dead with fear during the first two days of the siege, on the third day they suddenly became very courageous, to the point of mocking their enemies. 'Who would doubt', he asks rhetorically, 'that this success

[81] On the miracles of Demetrios, see Déroche 2000, pp. 145, 151–3; Dal Santo 2012, pp. 183–95.
[82] *ἀδυναμίας ἢ ἀσπλαγχνίας ἢ προσωπολημψίας*: *Miracles of St Demetrios* 40 (I, p. 79).
[83] Ibid. 166–75 (I, pp. 161–5). [84] Déroche 2000, p. 145.

was caused by divine action . . . who can raise the dead, apart from God . . . who, if not God, could inspire their courage?'.[85]

Some of the Thessalonikans seem to have doubted precisely this. John's emphasis on the theme appears to have been a reaction to sceptics who thought either that the events were attributable to human causes, or that God had abandoned the city. Thus in the same chapter, he repeatedly anticipates and attempts to refute doubts that could be raised about God's involvement in Thessaloniki's rescue, commenting, for example, after attributing a sudden upturn in the city's fortunes to God's decision to heed the citizens' prayers, 'But perhaps you will say, "What is this clear from? Who saw God? Or who heard Him promising salvation, that He would assure that the city would be watered with goodness?"'[86] He subsequently claims that many people desire further proof that God had saved the city:

> but since the mind of many desires that a narration should be supplied of other things that happened which establish that only the hand of God, through the intercession of the victorious one [Demetrios], saved the city at that time, we will not fail to fulfil your desire, as long as you eagerly promise to listen to me piously and faithfully.[87]

The last clause of this passage seems to acknowledge that his proofs will only be effective for those who already have faith! John even refers to objectors who might claim that by attributing the salvation of the city to God's providence, he was putting the Thessalonikans to shame, by denying their own bravery.[88] And while the disasters seem to have encouraged some to deny God's determinative role in affairs, they may have led others to claim that God had turned against the city: John also condemns the view held by some citizens, 'with the Devil causing this wicked suspicion', that God actually wanted Thessaloniki to be taken by the enemy.[89] This is in fact what John himself had implied when he described the angels telling Demetrios to leave the city as God had decided it should be handed over to the enemies; he thus responds rather inconsistently to the pressures of justifying the roles of both Demetrios and God and of refuting scepticism about them.

[85] *ἆρα τίς ἀμφιβάλλοι μὴ θεϊκῆς ἐνεργείας εἶναι κατόρθωμα . . . τίς γὰρ νεκροὺς ἐγείρει; οὐχὶ μόνος θεός; . . . τοὺς οὖν τοιούτους μεταβαλεῖν εἰς ἀνδρείαν, τίνος, εἰ μὴ θεοῦ; Miracles of St Demetrios* 143–4 (I, p. 151).

[86] *ἀλλ' ἴσως ἐρεῖς· πόθεν δῆλον; τίς εἶδε θεόν; ἢ τίς ἤκουσεν αὐτοῦ τὴν σωτηρίαν ὑποσχομένου, ὅτι διαβεβαιοῦσαι τὴν πόλιν ὑετισθῆναι τῇ ἀγαθότητι*; ibid. 142 (I, p. 150).

[87] *ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ τῶν πολλῶν ὁ νοῦς καὶ ἄλλων τινῶν γεγενημένων προτεθῆναι διήγησιν βούλεται, τῶν συστησόντων ὡς χεὶρ μόνη θεοῦ ταῖς τοῦ ἀθλοφόρου πρεσβείαις τηνικαῦτα τὴν πόλιν ἐξέσωσεν, οὐκ ἀποροῦμεν ὑμῶν τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν πληρῶσαι, μόνον αὐτοὶ θεοφιλὴ καὶ πιστὴν ἀκοὴν ἡμῖν ὑποσχεῖν προθυμήθητε*: ibid. 145 (I, p. 151).

[88] Ibid. 164 (I, p. 158).

[89] *τοῦ ἐχθροῦ ὑποβαλόντος ἐννοίας πονηράς*: ibid. 149 (p. 153).

These allusions to potential sceptics, many of whom doubted that divine providence was responsible for the events in the city, recall Symeon the Younger's hagiographer's claims that impious astrologists denied that earthquakes were the product of God's will.[90] But John does not here accuse these sceptics of any recognized form of heterodoxy; there is nothing to imply that they are anything more than Christians who have come, perhaps as a result of the disasters afflicting their city, to doubt the direct and benevolent intervention of God in everyday affairs. John's emphatic insistence on God's determinative role in all events thus seems to have been intended to refute doubts about his providence among the city's Christian population. The *Miracles of St Demetrios* appears to have been an (occasionally inconsistent) *apologia* not only for the saint's role in defending the city, but for God's goodwill and providence itself.

The *Miracles of Demetrios* thus shows both that the hagiographer of a martyr cult did not need to be restricted in his scope and that, if he did extend his claims about his martyr's power, in a time of real crisis this raised the same kinds of challenges and dilemmas faced by the authors of saint's Lives. Is it therefore possible that the more modest, or at least more narrowly focused, claims about the thaumaturgic powers of their saints made by the authors of most miracle collections, were in part the result of a desire, conscious or unconscious, to avoid facing these great challenges? In a world which must have seemed increasingly out of control, saints could no longer be said with any credibility to be regulating the cosmos; but they could still, perhaps, help individual supplicants regain control of their lives and bodies. At the very least, even if this argument is not accepted for the traditional martyr cults, it is surely not coincidental that the author of the *Life of Martha*, who was not writing about the long-established incubation cult of a famous martyr, but about a recently deceased, relatively minor figure, adopted a similarly narrow focus, concentrating on healing miracles benefiting small numbers of local monks and villagers, in a sharp break from the approach used by the author of the *Life of Symeon*.

Conclusion

The disasters of the sixth and seventh centuries brought to the fore conceptual and theological problems which were inherent within late antique Christianity, but usually submerged. In particular, they raised questions about the role of the intercessor between God and man, and about theodicy itself. When there seemed to be an inescapable conflict of interest between God's will and the desires and safety of the Christian population—as when disasters threatened to punish large

[90] See above pp. 151–2.

groups, irrespective of the piety of individual victims—the hagiographer was forced to choose, if not consciously, whether to present his saint as displaying ultimate loyalty to God, or to his supplicants. Both options were problematic: if the saint accepted God's will, he had arguably failed in his duties to his devotees; if he resisted, then he ran the risk of accusing God of acting unjustly. The very idea of an intercessor trying to change God's mind, although fundamental to late antique Christianity, was theologically challenging, as implied by part of Barsanouphios of Gaza's response to a question about the plague: 'There are indeed many people who entreat God's loving kindness to remove his wrath from the world; and, of course, none is more kind and loving than God, who desires to have mercy and opposes the multitude of sins that occur in the world.'[91] Although this was undoubtedly not his intention, Barsanouphios's words raise the question of why an intercessor should be needed to deal with an all-loving, all-good God.

As we have seen, hagiographers adopted very different approaches to these challenges: Symeon the Younger was shown resisting God's will, Nicholas of Sion as reluctantly enforcing it, and George of Choziba as actively calling for divine punishment for the people's sins. The contrast between these approaches demonstrates that there was no pre-existing, agreed model of reacting to such pressures, perhaps because there was no perfect, unproblematic, response. The hagiographers are unlikely to have conceived of the problem in the terms in which it has been described here, nor, perhaps, to have realized that their solutions were sometimes theologically awkward. Yet, as we have seen, they did struggle, not always with success, to show that their holy men were neither impotent nor heartless; that they were both vessels of God's will and effective mediators on behalf of their supplicants. These apologetic arguments must have been a response to real criticisms or doubts raised about the saints within contemporary society.

At a conceptual level, the problem of intercession was equally relevant to the authors of miracle collections of long-dead saints. Yet, because the authors of most such collections from this period restricted themselves to recounting healing miracles for individual supplicants, rather than treating earthquakes or invasions threatening entire populations, the difficulties were less sharply exposed, and their saints' powers less seriously challenged. Natural and military disasters were ignored, rather than justified. As has been argued, this was not simply a question of genre, since the *Life of Martha* shares in this respect the characteristics of many miracle collections, whereas the *Miracles of St Demetrios* is much more similar to contemporary saints' Lives. It could thus be argued that the Lives of Symeon and Martha embody two very different ways of responding to the crisis in holiness of the late sixth and seventh centuries. The author of the former adopted a clearly

[91] Barsanouphios and John of Gaza, *Letter* 569 (II.II, p. 732, trans. II, p. 146).

apologetic but also polemical tone, blaming the disasters in large part on Antioch's wealthy 'pagans' as well as experimenting with various, sometimes contradictory, Old Testament explanations for events. The author of the latter, in contrast, refocused the goals of the cult, apparently avoiding ambitious claims that his saint could defend entire regions or cities, and instead focusing on the healings of individuals who devoted themselves to Martha's cult and to the liturgical rituals at her shrine. Symeon's hagiographer may well have been writing before the Persian and Arab conquests of much of the Middle East; if Martha's hagiographer was writing during this period of high tension, it is perhaps unsurprising that the scope of the work was drastically reduced. In a climate of political and social uncertainty, during or after crises which raised serious questions not only about saints but about God's providence itself, a reorientation of priorities was, in fact, only to be expected.

Conclusion

The abundant surviving evidence relating to the cult of Symeon the Younger sheds light not only on the life of the stylite himself but also on wider developments in holiness in the sixth and seventh centuries. Symeon lived through a critical period in the history of the Antiochene region. Although the source material does not allow a full reconstruction of the social and economic situation in the area, it does suggest that the city and its environs were experiencing considerable hardships and tensions, tensions which were often expressed in religious terms but may well have reflected other social and political concerns. In this environment, Symeon appears to have carved out a role for himself as a figure of religious authority, in the face of considerable opposition. The sermon collection attributed to him suggests that this authority rested in large part on his claims to be the recipient of divine visions. He used this prophetic voice to make bold social statements, capitalizing on divisions between the rich and the poor, and on fears of paganism, to draw stark lines between the wicked and the pious in Antiochene society. His focus on the end of the world, echoing wider eschatological trends in contemporary thought, lent his message greater urgency. Although the sermons themselves give no sign of the responses they evoked in their audience, their often harsh and aggressive language suggests that their speaker was a polemical figure who could have proved highly controversial.

The *Life of Symeon the Younger* confirms that the saint's position was hotly contested, both from within his monastery and by various sections of society at large. The hagiographer often veils the details of this opposition but reveals enough to show that it was crystallized and exacerbated in the context of external crisis. The *Life* is highly apologetic and polemical, and again seems to exploit social tensions in the city of Antioch; in particular, the hagiographer makes scapegoats for disaster out of the local elite, blaming their alleged adherence to paganism for God's implacable wrath against Antioch. In the *Life*, Symeon's mother, Martha, plays only a small role, but in the years after the stylite's death she came to be revered as a miracle-working saint in her own right. Her Life is very different in structure, tone, and content from that of the stylite; in terms of the controversies of Symeon's career, it adopts a more irenic approach, eschewing the polemic which is so predominant in the earlier text, and instead showing Martha urging Symeon to forgive his sceptics. The hagiographer makes no extravagant claims about Martha's miracle-working powers; unlike Symeon, she is not expected to defend Antioch from earthquake or invasion, but only to heal

Symeon Stylites the Younger and Late Antique Antioch: From Hagiography to History. Lucy Parker, Oxford University Press.
 DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780192865175.003.0007

individual supplicants who have turned to her shrine and performed the required rites. These Lives seem to exemplify two divergent ways of reacting to the crisis in holiness engendered by natural and military disasters in this period: the one adopts a direct, confrontational approach, using socially charged polemic to exculpate the saint for his failure to prevent disaster, while the other reveals a reorientation of expectations and priorities, as well as a reinterpretation of the process of the miracle that places the responsibility for its success onto the supplicant. Parallels to both these approaches can be found in other contemporary saints' Lives and miracle collections.

All of this material has broader implications for our understandings of late antique holy men and hagiography. First, it highlights the difficulties for a holy man in establishing his position, particularly in a period when the performance of miracles was considered to be an integral part of sanctity. In Symeon's case, these difficulties were increased by the severe disasters that afflicted Antioch during his lifetime. Crises undoubtedly laid bare the occasional powerlessness of holy men and other intercessors, as indicated by a story in the *Spiritual Meadow* of John Moschos:

> Scythopolis was the second city of Palestine. There I met Abba Anastasios who told us about Abba George the recluse: One night I got up . . . and I heard an elder weeping. I went and entreated him, saying, 'Abba, what is the matter, sir, that you weep so?' He answered me not a word. So I asked him again, 'Tell me the cause <of your grief>.' Sighing from the depths of his heart, he said to me, 'How should I not weep, seeing that our Lord is not willing to be placated on our account? I thought I stood before one who sat on a high throne, my child. Around him were several tens of thousands who besought and entreated him concerning a certain matter, but he would not be persuaded. Then a woman clothed in purple raiment came and fell down before him, saying, "Please, for my sake, grant this request," but he remained equally unmoved. That is why I weep and groan, for I am afraid of what is going to happen to me.' He said this to me at first light on the Thursday. The next day, Friday, about the ninth hour, there was a severe earthquake which overthrew the cities of the Phoenician coast.[1]

Abba George's account suggests that not only holy men, but even the Virgin Mary herself (surely the woman dressed in purple), could not always dissuade God from inflicting disasters on the earth. No story could more clearly display the failure of intercession in the face of God's implacable wrath.

But the position of the saint was not only difficult in times of exceptional crisis. Symeon's Life also reveals the more basic problem, applicable to almost any holy

[1] John Moschos, *Spiritual Meadow* 50 (col. 2905, trans. p. 41).

man, of managing potentially high expectations. For someone who claimed to have miraculous powers—or whose supporters claimed had miraculous powers—sanctity could be a burden as much as an opportunity. Claims to have a special relationship with God needed to be constantly reaffirmed and could easily be challenged by failure. The everyday difficulties of maintaining a reputation for holiness are illustrated particularly clearly in the letters of the sixth-century Palestinian holy men Barsanouphios and John. The two monks had to reply to various correspondents seeking explanations as to why the holy men's prophecies and prayers seemed to have failed. John, for instance, was asked:

> I sometimes happen to ask the fathers about the crops in my field, whether they will be good; or I may even have an enemy, and so I happen to ask about him, whether he is able to harm me. And the fathers respond that my crops will be good and that my enemy will not harm me. Then, however, my crops fail and my enemy is about to harm me; so what should I believe? And if I find that my thought becomes slackened in its faith because it thinks things have gone differently than expected, how can I revoke it and establish it again?[2]

John also had to explain why his prayers to save the life of the abbot of their monastery, Seridos, had not been successful, and why the saints' requests to God are not always granted.[3]

One particularly noteworthy exchange started with a question from a layman, who asked John whether his slave, who had recently been bitten by a dog, was going to die.[4] John's response seemed clear: 'there is nothing wrong with him. Do not be afraid. Rather, try to think of what is written: "Not a sparrow falls into a trap apart from your Father who is in heaven."'[5] The layman, we are told, assumed on the basis of this response that his slave would survive, but, in fact, he died two days later. In confusion, the layman asked John whether the slave was really dead. John confirmed that he had died, which prompted the man to ask why he had said that there was nothing wrong with him. The holy man replied that he had meant that there was nothing wrong with death from God, and added that his biblical citation had been intended to suggest that the slave would die. The layman's response, according to the surviving account, was brief: 'then, why was your answer so unclear?'[6] John replied that this should not have surprised him, 'for one should not always speak clearly about such things, since they are harmful and of no benefit to the person speaking'; he claimed that this was how Christ taught his disciples to speak.[7] The end of his response implies the condemnation of anyone who did not accept his words, suggesting that the saints benefit from the

[2] Barsanouphios and John, *Letters* 383 (II.I, p. 424, trans. II, p. 23).
[3] Ibid. 599 (II.II, pp. 798–800); 778, a–d (III, pp. 224–32).
[4] Ibid. 779–82 (III, pp. 232–6).
[5] Ibid. 779 (ed. III, p. 232, trans. II, p. 285).
[6] Ibid. (III, p. 234, trans. II, p. 286).
[7] Ibid.

criticism of their impious sceptics: 'now for those who are faithful, these things are for their understanding and benefit; however, for those who are not faithful, they are for our benefit through their scorn.'[8] If the layman replied to this, his response is not recorded.

At the very least, this exchange of letters proves that the expectations of a holy man and his supplicant did not always correspond neatly. John had failed to provide the straightforward guidance that the layman sought. Even if it cannot be proved, it is tempting to suggest that John was forced to reinterpret his initial response after events had turned out differently from how he had expected; certainly, he seems to have used ambiguity deliberately to avoid a difficult situation. We cannot know, unfortunately, whether the layperson accepted John's justification, or if the holy man lost a devotee through this disappointment. But the exchange certainly reveals some of the possible pitfalls in store for those who professed to possess, or were believed to possess, any kind of miraculous powers.

An episode recounted in the Acts of the Third Council of Constantinople (680–1) brings out still more clearly the potential embarrassment caused by the failure to perform miracles. During the fifteenth session of the synod, a monk, Polychronios, declared that he would resurrect a corpse to prove the validity of his monothelite beliefs. The synod produced a corpse and decided that the demonstration should take place outside, so that it could be witnessed by the crowds. Polychronios, we are told, tried for many hours to awaken the corpse, with no success; the crowd, and the synod, then anathematized him as a heretic.[9] This episode is, of course, recounted in an anti-monothelite source, and the dispute revolved around Christology, rather than the perhaps simpler question of whether Polychronios was a holy man. But it nonetheless provides a striking example of the dangers of claiming the ability to perform miracles, either through one's own powers or through Christ.

The status of the holy man was thus more precarious than it might appear in some hagiography. Even apart from the opposition which they often faced from various groups, from members of the clergy to farmers, their position as miracle-workers was inherently delicate. This may go some way towards explaining why many holy men appear to have played divisive and confrontational roles within society, insisting on strict standards of morality and often heightening pressure on traditional victims of Christian intolerance such as Jews, pagans, and 'heretics'.[10] Such actions could serve to deflect attention from their own weaknesses, to denigrate their critics (whom they could associate with these religious 'deviants'), and to increase their own authority, as they presented themselves as the

[8] Ibid. (III, p. 236, trans. II, p. 286).
[9] Acts of the Sixth Ecumenical Council, *ACO* 2nd series, 2.2 (1992), Session 15, pp. 674–82.
[10] See Gaddis 2005, chs 5–8.

champions of strict ethical standards, who often took a harsher line against religious or moral dissidents than did members of the establishment.

The precise implications of this behaviour were very different in different local contexts; in some situations, for instance, holy men's intolerant words and actions seem to have had the support of local bishops, while in other areas they furthered conflict between the two.[11] As we have seen, verbal or physical attacks could have a strong social dimension: thus both Symeon the Younger and Shenoute of Atripe used accusations of paganism to condemn the wealthy, perhaps in an attempt to shore up popular support against their opponents. Holy men's persecuting efforts did not always, however, meet with popular enthusiasm: John of Ephesus records that when one miaphysite holy man, Sergios, burnt a synagogue, the local church members allied with the Jewish population to protest against his behaviour.[12] This highlights again that holy men's actions were not always accepted unquestioningly; indeed, it seems highly unlikely that Sergios was viewed as a holy man at all by the local Christian community (let alone, of course, by the Jews whom he targeted). His efforts to stir up intolerance in what appears, from John's admittedly limited and highly partial account, to have been a relatively peaceful mixed community, thus serve as a powerful reminder both of the highly divisive behaviour of some holy men, and of the difficulties which they often faced in establishing their positions as sources of authority. This is not to suggest that all holy men always acted intolerantly, and certainly not to deny the validity, in some contexts, of Peter Brown's brilliant work on holy men as arbiters and mediators. But it is to emphasize both that their positions could be based, at least in part, on aggressive and divisive behaviour, and that few gained such authority within their local communities that they could act as unquestioned mediators in all situations.

The fragility of the position of the holy man points towards wider unresolved tensions at the heart of Christianity itself. In particular, the natural and military disasters which proved so challenging to holy men also raised serious questions about theodicy. The standard Christian explanation as to why God inflicted disasters on his people—that it was a punishment for their sins—did not prove emotionally satisfying in all situations, particularly when it was demonstrably clear that these punishments did not distinguish between the good and the impious. Thus, as we have seen, Evagrios Scholastikos admitted to having heretical thoughts after the plague killed his children but spared those of a pagan

[11] For co-operation between holy men and bishops, see e.g. Syriac *Life of Symeon* (pp. 636–8), which reports that local bishops sought the stylite's help in protesting against a new imperial policy of toleration towards Jews. The hagiographer could of course be exaggerating the bishops' reliance on the stylite for panegyrical purposes. For opposition between the two, see e.g. Kallinikos, *Life of Hypatios* 32.12–16 (pp. 212–14); 33.4–11 (pp. 216–18), in which Hypatios's opposition to Nestorios and to an attempt to reintroduce the Olympic Games were apparently resisted by bishop Eulalios of Chalcedon. These and comparable reports may well, of course, serve a polemical function rather than accurately reflecting reality.

[12] John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints* 5 (I, pp. 90–3).

neighbour.[13] So too Symeon the Younger himself is said to have accused God of killing the just with the impious in Antioch.[14] These examples are perhaps particularly striking because both are reported by unquestionably devout and orthodox Christians with close links to the Church. But other contemporaries, too, noticed flaws in this interpretation of catastrophe. The historian and lawyer Agathias, in his account of an earthquake in Constantinople in 557, records that only one noble, Anatolios, was killed. He reports that the common people claimed that this had been a fair punishment for his oppressive and wicked behaviour. Yet Agathias himself was not convinced by this argument:

> Personally I should be extremely hesitant to advance any sort of explanation for such occurrences. Undoubtedly the earthquake would have been a very real boon if it had been able to distinguish the wicked from the good, causing the former to perish miserably and graciously sparing the latter. But even granted that Anatolius really was a wicked man there were countless others in the city no better or even worse than he was. Yet he was suddenly struck down whilst the others have remained unscathed. It is, therefore, no plain or easy matter, I think, to ascertain why of all men Anatolius was the only one to lose his life.[15]

The author goes on to discuss this theme in Platonist, rather than biblical terms, but his words show clearly that it was easy to find fault, on various grounds, with the view that disasters were punishments for the wicked. This was a theological problem with no easy solution, and one which gained far greater emotional resonance in times of crisis. Holy men were particularly vulnerable to criticism in the aftermath of disasters because of their uneasy and in many ways conceptually incoherent position as mediators between God and man, but the ideological challenge posed to Christians by catastrophe ran deeper than this.

It is generally agreed that the eastern Roman empire saw widespread ideological developments in the sixth and seventh centuries, of which the processes described in this book constitute only a small part. There is less consensus, however, on what role disasters played in causing these developments and, in particular, *when* the major changes in ideology took place and thus which disasters could have contributed to them. Mischa Meier has argued that the reign of Justinian already saw significant ideological developments, largely as a result of the natural and military crises of his rule, developments which included a crisis of confidence in holy men and the concomitant emergence of supplementary, and perhaps rival, sources of divine intercession such as the cult of Mary, mother of God, and icons. He is concerned to refute the idea that it was only in the later, post-Justinianic,

[13] *Life of Symeon* 233 (pp. 210–11); Evagrios Scholastikos, 6.23 (p. 239). See above p. 151.
[14] See above p. 155. [15] Agathias, *Histories* 5.4.3–4 (pp. 168–9, trans. p. 139).

decades of the sixth century that widespread ideological change took place.[16] It is this later period on which Matthew Dal Santo focuses in his powerful study of scepticism towards saints' cults: he argues that criticism of saints flourished from the last quarter of the sixth century onwards as a result both of the military, financial, and political tensions which developed after Justinian's death and of the emperors' increasing attempts to turn to the saints for legitimization.[17] Others have focused on the military disasters of the seventh century as the major catalyst behind ideological crisis and reorientation.[18] All of this relates to still wider debates about the state of the eastern empire in this period: those who view its economy and society as having continued to flourish until at least the seventh-century Persian conquests are less likely to accept that there was any kind of ideological crisis in the sixth century.

Two points are of particular relevance here, especially with respect to the question of hagiography and a possible crisis of confidence in holy men. The first is that crisis could strike different areas at different times; even regions in close geographical proximity could experience very different fates.[19] As argued in the first chapter, Antioch and the countryside around it may well have experienced economic slowdown at a time when other regions of the empire, and indeed of Syria itself, remained prosperous. Consequently signs of tension and crisis could appear in sources from the Antiochene, like the *Life of Symeon Stylites the Younger*, before ideological crisis became widespread across the empire in the seventh century.

Yet the second point is perhaps more important: ideological crisis does not necessarily correlate directly to social and economic deprivation. As argued above, even if we can recognize that the long-term economic impact of plague, earthquakes, and invasions was not totally devastating, we should not neglect the testimony of the written sources as to their psychological effects on some contemporaries.[20] Natural disasters could have historical impact upon ideologies and mentalities which was far greater than their economic effect, as shown by the Lisbon earthquake of 1755.[21] We should not discount the evidence from the *Life of Nicholas of Sion* that the plague caused severe hostility towards the holy man, purely because archaeological evidence suggests that Asia Minor remained generally prosperous throughout the late sixth century.[22] Holy men were less responsible for the economic situation of their region than for their supplicants' lives and health, and the plagues and earthquakes of the sixth century undoubtedly posed

[16] Meier 2003, passim, esp. pp. 642–3. [17] Dal Santo 2012, esp. pp. 321–35.
[18] See e.g. Auzépy 1995; Haldon 1997, esp. chs 9 and 11.
[19] On the diverse developments of even nearby settlements, see e.g. Horden and Purcell 2000, p. 53.
[20] See above p. 32. [21] Braun and Radner 2005.
[22] For a positive assessment of the economy of Asia Minor in this period (although one acknowledging that the plague may have caused a temporary 'urban recession'), see Whittow 2001. Whittow's positive view has been broadly accepted in recent scholarship, as in most of the articles in Jacobs and Elton 2019.

them significant challenges, to the extent that their hagiographers were forced to exculpate them in often confused and conflicting ways.

The polemical and apologetic nature of many saints' Lives points, I believe, towards one way of approaching the formidable challenge of writing history from hagiography. It is unsurprising that some historians try to avoid the extensive use of hagiographical material; it certainly poses considerable difficulties and cannot answer all questions. Not all hagiographies are equally historically useful. Yet many hagiographic texts are undoubtedly anchored in some kind of social reality, even if this is not easy to uncover. The kinds of defensive tactics employed by Symeon the Younger's hagiographer do not make sense in a vacuum; rather, they must be a response to real concerns and criticisms among wider society. It is thus possible to use hagiography for historical purposes by reading it 'against the grain', that is to say, by, rather than surrendering to the narrative flow of the text, seeking to understand the pressures which have caused the narrative to be structured as it is. Such a method of approaching hagiography opens a valuable window onto often-obscured religious and social trends, and into the ways in which people responded to changes and conflicts in society around them. Hagiography offers, in fact, more vivid insights than many types of sources traditionally valued by historians into contemporary debates and concerns, concerns which reached to the very heart of Christianity.

Bibliography

Sources

ACO = E. Schwartz et al. (eds), *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* (Berlin, 1914–).

Agathias, *Histories*, ed. R. Keydell, *Agathiae Myrinaei Historiarum Libri Quinque* (Berlin, 1967), trans. J. D. Frendo, *Agathias: The Histories* (Berlin, 1975).

Anastasios of Sinai, *Questions and Answers*, ed. M. Richard and J. A. Munitiz, *Quaestiones et Responsiones* (Turnhout, 2006), trans. J. A. Munitiz, *Anastasios of Sinai: Questions and Answers* (Turnhout, 2011).

Antonios, *Life of Symeon Stylites the Elder*, ed. H. Lietzmann, *Das Leben des Heiligen Symeon Stylites* (Leipzig, 1908), pp. 20–78, trans. Doran 1992, pp. 87–100.

Antony of Choziba, *Life of George of Choziba*, ed. C. House, 'Vita sancti Georgii Chozibitae auctore Antonio Chozibita', *Analecta Bollandiana* 7 (1888), pp. 95–144, partial English trans. T. Vivian and A. N. Athanassakis in T. Vivian, *Journeying into God: Seven Early Monastic Lives* (Minneapolis, 1986), pp. 53–105.

Athanasios of Alexandria, *Life of Antony*, ed. Bartelink 1994, trans. T. Vivian and A. N. Athanassakis, *The Life of Antony: The Coptic Life and the Greek Life* (Kalamazoo, MI, 2003).

Barsanouphios and John of Gaza, *Letters*, ed. F. Neyt, P. de Angelis-Noah, and L. Regnault, *Barsanuphe et Jean de Gaza: Correspondance*, 3 vols (Paris, 1997–2002), trans. J. Chryssavgis, *Barsanuphius and John: Letters*, 2 vols (Washington, DC, 2006–7).

(Pseudo-)Besa, *Life of Shenoute*, ed. J. Leipoldt and W. E. Crum, *Sinuthii Archimandritae Vita et Opera Omnia I* (Paris, 1906), trans. D. N. Bell, *The Life of Shenoute by Besa* (Kalamazoo, MI, 1983).

Bohairic *Life of Pachomios*: see *Life of Pachomios*.

Cyril of Scythopolis, Lives of Euthymius and Sabas, ed. E. Schwartz, *Kyrillos von Skythopolis* (Leipzig, 1939), trans. R. M. Price, *Cyril of Scythopolis: The Lives of the Monks of Palestine* (Kalamazoo, MI, 1991).

Pseudo-Dionysios of Tel-Mahre, *Chronicle*, ed. J.-B. Chabot, *Incerti auctoris Chronicon Pseudo-Dionysianum vulgo dictum*, 2 vols (Paris, 1927–33), third part trans. W. Witakowski, *Pseudo-Dionysius of Tel-Mahre: Chronicle*, Part III (Liverpool, 1996).

Dorotheos of Gaza, 'Instructions', ed. and French trans. L. Regnault and J. de Préville, *Dorothée de Gaza: Oeuvres Spirituelles* (Paris, 1963), English trans. E. P. Wheeler, *Dorotheos of Gaza: Discourses and Sayings* (Kalamazoo, MI, 1977).

Evagrios of Pontus (all texts are translated into English in Sinkewicz 2003):

'On the Eight Thoughts', ed. *Patrologia Graeca* 79 (Paris, 1865), cols 1145–64.

'Foundations', ed. *Patrologia Graeca* 40 (Paris, 1863), cols 1252–64.

'On Thoughts', ed. and French trans. P. Géhin, C. Guillaumont, and A. Guillaumont, *Évagre le Pontique: sur les pensées* (Paris, 1998).

'Praktikos', ed. and French trans. A. and C. Guillaumont, *Traité Pratique ou Le Moine*, 2 vols (Paris, 1971).

'To Eulogius', ed. Sinkewicz 2003, pp. 310–33.

Elias, *Life of John of Tella*, ed. E. W. Brooks, *Vita virorum apud monophysitas celeberrimorum*, 2 vols (Paris, 1907), I, pp. 29–95, trans. J. R. Ghanem, 'The Biography of John of Tella (d. A.D. 537) by Elias translated from the Syriac with a historical introduction and historical and linguistic commentaries', unpublished PhD dissertation (University of Wisconsin, 1970).

Evagrios Scholastikos, *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. J. Bidez and L. Parmentier, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius: with the Scholia* (London, 1898), trans. M. Whitby, *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus* (Liverpool, 2000).

Eustratios Presbyter:

Life of Eutychios, ed. C. Laga, *Eustratii Presbyteri Vita Eutychii Patriarchae Constantinopolitani* (Turnhout, 1992).

Life of Golindouch, ed. A. Papadoulos-Kerameus, in A. Papadoulos-Kerameus *Αναλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμιτικης Σταχυολογιας*, IV (St Petersburg, 1897, reprinted Brussels, 1963), pp. 149–74.

First Greek *Life of Pachomios*: see *Life of Pachomios*.

George of Pisidia, *Life of Anastasios the Persian*, ed. and French trans. B. Flusin, *Saint Anastase le Perse et l'histoire de la Palestine au début du VIIe siècle*, 2 vols (Paris, 1992), I, pp. 191–259.

George of Sykeon, *Life of Theodore of Sykeon*, ed. and French trans. A.-J. Festugière, *Vie de Théodore de Sykeôn*, 2 vols (Brussels, 1970), partial English trans. Dawes and Baynes 1948, pp. 85–192.

Gregory of Antioch, 'On the Baptism of Christ' [II], *Patrologia Graeca* 88 (Paris, 1864), cols 1872–84.

Gregory of Nyssa:

Life of Gregory Thaumatourgos, ed. G. Heil, *Gregory Nysseni Sermones*, Part II (Leiden, 1990), pp. 3–57, trans. M. Slusser in *St. Gregory Thaumaturgus: Life and Works* (Washington, DC, 1998), pp. 41–87.

Life of Macrina, ed. and French trans. P. Maraval, *Vie de sainte Macrine* (Paris, 1971).

Homily = see Severos of Antioch, Cathedral Homilies.

Abba Isaiah of Scetis, *Ascetic Discourses*, trans. J. Chryssavgis and P. R. Penkett (Kalamazoo, MI, 2002).

John Chrysostom:

'Against Those Who Go to the Circus Games' [= Seventh Homily on Lazarus and the Rich Man], ed. *Patrologia Graeca* 48 (Paris, 1862), cols 1043–54, trans. C. Roth, *St John Chrysostom: On Wealth and Poverty* (Crestwood, NY, 1984), pp. 125–40.

'On Almsgiving', ed. *Patrologia Graeca* 51 (Paris, 1862), cols 261–72, trans. Christo 1998, pp. 131–49.

'On Almsgiving and the Ten Virgins' [= Third Homily on Repentance], ed. *Patrologia Graeca* 49 (Paris, 1862), cols 291–300, trans. Christo 1998, pp. 28–42.

'On Fasting' [= Sixth Homily on Repentance], ed. *Patrologia Graeca* 49 (Paris, 1862), cols 313–24, trans. Christo 1998, pp. 69–85.

Seventh Homily on Colossians, ed. *Patrologia Graeca* 62 (Paris, 1862), cols 343–52, trans. Mayer and Allen 2000, pp. 73–84.

42nd Homily on Genesis, ed. *Patrologia Graeca* 54 (Paris, 1862), cols 385–95, trans. R. C. Hill, *John Chrysostom: Homilies on Genesis 18–45* (Washington, DC, 2001).

Discourses on Images, ed. B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos* 3 (Berlin, 1975), trans. A. Louth, *John Chrysostom: Three Treatises on the Divine Images* (Crestwood, NY, 2003).

John Lydos, *De Magistratibus*, ed. and trans. A. C. Bandy, *Ioannes Lydus: On Powers, or, the Magistracies of the Roman State* (Philadelphia, 1983).

John of Ephesus:
Lives of the Eastern Saints, ed. and trans. E. W. Brooks, 3 vols, originally *Patrologia Orientalis* 17–19 (Paris, 1923–5).
Ecclesiastical History, Part 3, ed. E. W. Brooks, *Iohannis Ephesini*, *Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, *Pars Tertia*, *Vol. 1: Textus* (Paris, 1935). English translation by R. Payne Smith, *The Third Part of the Ecclesiastical History of John*, *Bishop of Ephesus* (Oxford, 1860).
John of Epiphania, *History*, ed. C. Muller, *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum* IV (Paris, 1868), pp. 272–6.
John Malalas, *Chronicle*, ed. I. Thurn, *Ioannis Malalae Chronographia* (Berlin, 2000), trans. E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, and R. Scott, *The Chronicle of John Malalas* (Melbourne, 1986).
John Moschos, *Spiritual Meadow*, ed. *Patrologia Graeca* 87, cols 2851–3116, trans. J. Wortley, *John Moschos: Spiritual Meadow* (Kalamazoo, MI, 1992).
John Rufus, *Life of Peter the Iberian*, ed. and trans. C. B. Horn and R. R. Phenix, Jr., *John Rufus: the* Lives *of Peter the Iberian*, *Theodosios of Jerusalem*, *and the Monk Romanus* (Atlanta, 2008), pp. 2–281.
John of Tella, *Canons*, ed. T. J. Lamy, *Dissertatio de syrorum fide et disciplina in re eucharistica* (Louvain, 1859), pp. 62–96.
Justinian, *Novels*, ed. R. Schoell and G. Kroll, *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, Vol. III: *Novellae* (Berlin, 1985).
Kallinikos, *Life of Hypatios*, ed. and French trans. G. J. M. Bartelink, *Callinicos: Vie d'Hypatios* (Paris, 1971).
Leontios of Neapolis:
Life of John the Almsgiver, ed. and French trans. Festugière and Rydén 1974, pp. 255–637, partial English trans. Dawes and Baynes 1948, pp. 195–270.
Life of Symeon the Holy Fool, ed. and French trans. Festugière and Rydén 1974, pp. 1–254, English trans. Krueger 1996, pp. 131–71.
Life of Abibos Nekreseli, French trans. B. Martin-Hisard, 'Les "treize saints pères": formation et évolution d'une tradition hagiographique géorgienne (Vie–XIIe siècles)', Part 1, appendix, *Revue des Études Géorgiennes et Caucasiennes* 2 (1986), pp. 76–80.
Life of Alexander Akoimetos, ed. and Latin trans. E. de Stroop, *La Vie d'Alexandre l'Acémète*, *Patrologia Orientalis* 6 (1911), pp. 645–704, English trans. Caner 2002, pp. 249–80.
Life of Alypios, ed. Delehaye 1923, pp. 148–69.
Life of Daniel, ed. Delehaye 1923, pp. 1–94, trans. Dawes and Baynes 1948, pp. 1–84.
Life of John bar Apthonia, ed. and French trans. F. Nau, *Vie de Jean Bar Apthonia* (Paris, 1902).
Life of Marcellus Akoimetos, ed. G. Dagron, 'La vie ancienne de Marcel l'Acémète', *Analecta Bollandiana* 86 (1968), pp. 271–321.
Life of Martha, ed. Van den Ven 1962–70, II, pp. 249–314.
Life of Nicholas of Sion, ed. and trans. Ševčenko and Ševčenko 1984.
Lives of Pachomios (all translated in Veilleux 1980):
Bohairic *Life*, ed. L.-Th. Lefort, *S. Pachomii Vita Bohairice Scripta* (Leuven, 1925, repr. 1953).
Sahidic *Lives*, ed. L.-Th. Lefort, *S. Pachomii Vitae Sahidice Scriptae* (Leuven, 1933/4, repr. 1952).
First Greek Life, ed. F. Halkin, *S. Pachomii Vitae Graecae* (Brussels, 1932), pp. 1–96.

Life of Rabbula, ed. J. J. Overbeck, *S. Ephraemi Syri, Rabulae episcopi Edesseni, Balaei aliorumque opera selecta* (Oxford, 1865), pp. 154–209, trans. Doran 2006, pp. 41–105.

Life of Severos of Antioch (attributed to John of Beth Apthonia), ed. and French trans. M.-A. Kugener, *Vie de Sévère par Jean de Beth Apthonia*, *Patrologia Orientalis* 2.3 (1904), pp. 207–64, English trans. S. Brock and B. Fitzgerald, *Two Early Lives of Severos, Patriarch of Antioch* (Liverpool, 2013), pp. 101–39.

[Syriac] *Life of Symeon Stylites the Elder*, ed. P. Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, IV (Paris, 1894), pp. 507–665.

Life of Symeon = Life of Symeon Stylites the Younger, ed. and French trans. Van den Ven 1962–70, I.

Life of Thekla, ed. and French trans. Dagron 1978, pp. 167–283.

Lydos: see John Lydos.

Malalas: see John Malalas.

Marcellinus Comes, *Chronicle*, ed. Mommsen, repr. with English translation in Croke 1995.

Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle*, ed. and French trans. J. B. Chabot, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, Patriarche Jacobite d'Antioche (1166–1199)*, 5 vols (Paris, 1899–1924).

Miracles of Artemios, ed. and trans. V. S. Crisafulli and J. W. Nesbitt, *The Miracles of St. Artemios* (Leiden, 1997).

Miracles of Cosmas and Damian, ed. L. Deubner (Leipzig, 1907).

(Miaphysite) *Miracles of Cosmas and Damian*, ed. E. Rupprecht, *Cosmae et Damiani sanctorum medicorum vitam et miracula e codice londinensi* (Berlin, 1935).

(Anonymous) *Miracles of Cyrus and John*, ed. Déroche 2012.

Miracles of Demetrios, ed. and French trans. Lemerle 1978–81, I.

Miracles of Thekla, ed. and French trans. Dagron 1978, pp. 284–412, English trans. A.-M. Talbot and S. F. Johnston, *Miracle Tales from Byzantium* (Cambridge, MA, 2012), pp. 3–201.

Miracles of Therapon, ed. L. Deubner, *De Incubatione* (Leipzig, 1900), pp. 113–35.

Monophysite Documents, ed. and Latin trans. J.-B. Chabot, *Documenta Ad Origines Monophysitarum Illustrandas* (Leuven, 1907/1933).

Monothelite Florilegium, ed. Brock 1985.

Photios, *Bibliotheca*, ed. and French trans. R. Henry, *Photius: Bibliothèque*, 9 vols (Paris, 1959–91).

Philoxenos of Mabbog, *Lettre aux moines de Senoun*, ed. and French trans. A. de Halleux, 2 vols (Leuven, 1963).

Prokopios of Caesarea:

History of the Wars, ed. Haury (corr. Worth), *Bella*, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1962–3), trans. H. B. Dewing, *Procopius: History of the Wars*, 5 vols (Cambridge, MA, 1914–28).

Secret History, ed. Haury (corr. Worth), *Historia Arcana* (Leipzig 1963), trans. G. A. Williamson and P. Sarris, *Procopius: The Secret History* (London, 2007).

On Buildings, ed. Haury (corr. Worth), *De Aedificiis Libri VI* (Leipzig 1964); trans. H. B. Dewing, *Procopius: On Buildings* (Cambridge, MA, 1940).

Romanos the Melodist, *Kontakia*, ed. P. Maas and C. A. Trypanis, *Sancti Romani Melodi Cantica: Cantica Genuina* (Oxford, 1963).

Sermons: see Symeon Stylites the Younger, Sermons.

Severos of Antioch:
Letters:
The Sixth Book of the Select Letters of Severus Patriarch of Antioch in the Syriac Version of Athanasius of Nisibis, ed. and trans. E. W. Brooks, 2 vols (London, 1902–4).
A Collection of Letters of Severus of Antioch from Numerous Syriac Manuscripts, ed. and trans. E. W. Brooks, *Patrologia Orientalis* 12.2 (1915), pp. 163–342, *Patrologia Orientalis* 14.1 (1920), pp. 1–310.
Hymns:
The Hymns of Severus and Others in the Syriac Version of Paul of Edessa as Revised by James of Edessa, ed. and trans. E. W. Brooks, *Patrologia Orientalis* 6.1 (1909), pp. 1–179, *Patrologia Orientalis* 7.5 (1911), pp. 593–802.
Cathedral Homilies:
1–17, ed. and French trans. M. Brière and F. Graffin, *Patrologia Orientalis* 38.2 (1976), pp. 247–470.
18–25, ed. and French trans. M. Brière and F. Graffin, *Patrologia Orientalis* 37.1 (1975), pp. 3–180.
26–31, ed. and French trans. M. Brière and F. Graffin, *Patrologia Orientalis* 36.4 (1974), pp. 537–676.
32–9, ed. and French trans. M. Brière, F. Graffin, and C. J. A. Lash, *Patrologia Orientalis* 36.3 (1972), pp. 393–533.
40–5, ed. and French trans. M. Brière and F. Graffin, *Patrologia Orientalis* 36.1 (1971), pp. 5–137.
46–51, ed. and French trans. M. Brière and F. Graffin, *Patrologia Orientalis* 35.3 (1969), pp. 283–389.
52–7, ed. and French trans. R. Duval, *Patrologia Orientalis* 4.1 (1908), pp. 3–94.
58–69, ed. and French trans. M. Brière, *Patrologia Orientalis* 8.2 (1912), pp. 209–396.
70–6, ed. and French trans, M. Brière, *Patrologia Orientalis* 12.1 (1919), pp. 3–163.
77, ed. and French trans. M.-A. Kugener and E. Triffaux, *Patrologia Orientalis* 16.5 (1922), pp. 763–864.
78–83, ed. and French trans. M. Brière, *Patrologia Orientalis* 20.2 (1928), pp. 273–434.
84–90, ed. and French trans. M. Brière, *Patrologia Orientalis* 23.1 (1932), pp. 3–176.
91–8, ed. and French trans. M. Brière, *Patrologia Orientalis* 25.1 (1935), pp. 3–174.
99–103, ed. and French trans. I. Guidi, *Patrologia Orientalis* 22.2 (1929), pp. 203–312.
104–12, ed. and French trans. M. Brière, *Patrologia Orientalis* 25.4 (1943), pp. 621–815.
113–19, ed. and French trans. M. Brière, *Patrologia Orientalis* 26.3 (1950), pp. 261–450.
120–5, ed. and French trans. M. Brière, *Patrologia Orientalis* 29.1 (1961), pp. 8–262.
Sophronios of Jerusalem, *Miracles of Cyrus and John*, ed. N. F. Marcos, *Los 'Thaumata' de Sofronio: Contribución al estudio de la 'Incubatio' cristiana* (Madrid, 1975).
Stephen the Deacon, *Life of Stephen the Younger*, ed. and French trans. M.-F. Auzépy, *La Vie d'Étienne le Jeune par Étienne le Diacre* (Aldershot, 2007).
Symeon Stylites the Younger:
'Letter to Justin II', ed. *Patrologia Graeca* 86b, cols 3216–30.
Sermons, 1–4 ed. Van den Ven 1957, pp. 1–55; 4–30 ed. and Latin trans. A. Mai, *Novum Patrum Bibliotheca* 8.3 (Rome, 1871), pp. 4–156.
Syriac *Life of Symeon*: see under *Life of Symeon Stylites the Elder*.
Theodore of Petra, *Life of Theodosios*, ed. H. Usener, *Der Heilige Theodosios: Schriften des Theodoros und Kyrillos* (Leipzig, 1890), pp. 3–101.

Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *History of the Monks of Syria*, ed. P. Canivet and A. Leroy-Molinghen, *Théodoret de Cyr: Histoire des moines de Syrie: Histoire Philothée*, 2 vols (Paris, 1977–9), English trans. R. M. Price, *Theodoret of Cyrrhus: History of the Monks of Syria* (Kalamazoo, MI, 1985).

Theophanes, Chronicle, ed. C. de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia* (Leipzig, 1883), trans. C. Mango, R. Scott, and G. Greattrex, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, A.D. 284–813* (Oxford, 1997).

Theophylact Simocatta, *History*, ed. C. de Boor, re-ed. P. Wirth, *Theophylacti Simocattae Historiae* (Stuttgart, 1972), trans. M. Whitby and M. Whitby, *The* History *of Theophylact Simocatta* (Oxford, 1986).

Zachariah of Mytilene (Zacharios Scholastikos), *Life of Severos*, ed. and French trans. M.-A. Kugener, *Vie de Sévère par Zacharie le scholastique*, *Patrologia Orientalis* 2.1 (1904), pp. 7–115, English trans. S. Brock and B. Fitzgerald, *Two Early Lives of Severos, Patriarch of Antioch* (Liverpool, 2013), pp. 33–100.

Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene, *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. and Latin. trans. E. W. Brooks, *Historia ecclesiastica Zachariae Rhetori vulgo adscripta*, 4 vols, Paris 1919–24, partial English trans. G. Greatrex, R. R. Phenix, C. B. Horn, S. Brock, and W. Witakowski, *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor: Church and War in Late Antiquity* (Liverpool, 2011).

Secondary Literature

Abramowksi, L., 1976. 'Gregory Thaumaturgus' Confession of Faith in Gregory of Nyssa and the Problem of its Genuineness', in her *Formula and Context: Studies in Early Christian Thought* (Aldershot, 1992), article VII, originally published in German in *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 87 (1976), pp. 145–66.

Aigle, D. (ed.), 2000. *Miracle et karāma: hagiographies médiévales comparées* (Turnhout).

Alcuin Francis, J., 1981. 'Pagan and Christian Philosophy in Athanasius' *Vita Antonii*', *The American Benedictine Review* 32.2, pp. 100–13.

Alexandre, M., 1996. 'La construction d'un modèle de sainteté dans la *Vie d'Antoine* par Athanase d'Alexandrie', in P. Walter (ed.), *Saint Antoine entre mythe et légende* (Grenoble), pp. 63–93.

Allen, P., 1980. 'Neo-Chalcedonianism and the Patriarchs of the Late Sixth Century', *Byzantion* 50, pp. 5–17.

Allen, P., 1981. *Evagrius Scholasticus the Church Historian* (Leuven).

Allen, P., 1996. 'Severus of Antioch and the Homily: The End of the Beginning?', in Allen and Jeffreys 1996, pp. 163–75.

Allen, P., 1997. 'John Chrysostom's Homilies on I and II Thessalonians: The Preacher and his Audience', *Studia Patristica* 31, pp. 3–21.

Allen, P., 1998. 'The Sixth-Century Greek Homily: A Re-Assessment', in Cunningham and Allen 1998, pp. 201–25.

Allen, P., 2011. 'Severus of Antioch as Theologian, Dogmatician, Pastor, and Hymnographer: A Consideration of his Work on the Feast of the Ascension', *Questions Liturgiques* 92, pp. 361–75.

Allen, P. and Hayward, C. T. R., 2004. *Severus of Antioch* (Abingdon).

Allen, P. and Jeffreys, E., 1996. *The Sixth Century: End or Beginning?* (Brisbane).

Allen, P. and Mayer, W. 1993. 'Computer and Homily: Accessing the Everyday Life of Early Christians', *Vigiliae Christianae* 47.3, pp. 260–80.

Allen, P. and Neil, B. 2013. *Crisis Management in Late Antiquity (410–590 CE): A Survey of the Evidence from Episcopal Letters* (Leiden, 2013).
Allen, P. and van Roey, A., 1994. *Monophysite Texts of the Sixth Century* (Leuven).
Alpi, F., 2009. *La route royale: Sévère d'Antioche et les églises d'Orient (512–518)*, vol. 1 (Beirut).
Ambraseys, N., 2009. *Earthquakes in the Mediterranean and Middle East: A Multidisciplinary Study of Seismicity up to 1900* (Cambridge).
Anrich, G., 1913–17. *Hagios Nikolaos: Der Heilige Nikolaos in der griechischen Kirche*, 2 vols (Leipzig).
Asa Eger, A., 2013. '(Re)Mapping Medieval Antioch: Urban Transformations from the Early Islamic to the Middle Byzantine Periods', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 67, pp. 95–134.
Asa Eger, A., 2015. *The Islamic-Byzantine Frontier: Interaction and Exchange among Muslim and Christian Communities* (London, 2015).
Athanassiadi, P., 2010. *Vers la pensée unique: la montée de l'intolérance dans l'Antiquité tardive* (Paris).
Avni, G., 2014. *The Byzantine-Islamic Transition in Palestine: An Archaeological Approach* (Oxford).
Auzépy, M.-F., 1995. 'L'évolution de l'attitude face au miracle à Byzance (VIIe–IXe siècle)', in *Miracles, prodiges et merveilles au Moyen Âge* (Paris), pp. 31–46.
Bagnall, R., 1996. *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton).
Baguenard, J.-M., 1988. *Les moines acémetes* (Bégrolles-en-Mauges).
Baker, D., 1976. 'Theodore of Sykeon and the Historians', in D. Baker (ed.), *The Orthodox Churches and the West* (Oxford), pp. 83–96.
Banaji, J., 2001. *Agrarian Change in Late Antiquity: Gold, Labour and Aristocratic Dominance* (Oxford).
Barnard, L. W., 1974. 'The Date of S. Athanasius' Vita Antonii', *Vigiliae Christianae* 27, pp. 169–75.
Barnard, L. W., 1997. 'Athanasius and the Pachomians', *Studia Patristica* 32, pp. 3–11.
Barnes, J., 1964. 'Shenute as a Historical Source', in *Actes du Xe Congrès International de Papyrologues* (Wrocław), pp. 151–9.
Barnes, T. D., 1986. 'Angel of Light or Mystic Initiate? The Problem of the "Life of Antony"', *Journal of Theological Studies* 37.2, pp. 353–68.
Barnes, T. D., 2001. 'The Funerary Speech for John Chrysostom (BHG 871 = CPG 6517)', *Studia Patristica* 37, pp. 328–45.
Barnes, T. D., 2010. *Early Christian Hagiography and Roman History* (Tübingen).
Bartelink, G. J. M., 1994. *Athanase d'Alexandrie: Vie d'Antoine* (Paris).
Bartl, K. and Moaz, A. (eds), 2008. *Residences, Castles, Settlements: Transformation Processes from Late Antiquity to Early Islam in Bilad al-Sham* (Rahden).
Bartlett, R. 2013. *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things? Saints and Worshippers from the Martyrs to the Reformation* (Princeton).
Bavant, B., 2013. 'Dans le Massif Calcaire de Syrie du Nord, les propriétaires non residents de l'époque byzantine sont-ils vraiment "invisibles"?', in Charpentier and Puech 2013, pp. 33–59.
Behlmer, H., 1998. 'Visitors to Shenoute's Monastery', in D. Frankfurter (ed.), *Pilgrimage and Holy Space in Late Antique Egypt* (Leiden), pp. 341–71.
Belgin-Henry, A., 2015 [= Henry 2015]. 'The Pilgrimage Centre of St. Symeon the Younger: Designed by Angels, Supervised by a Saint, Constructed by Pilgrims', PhD dissertation (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign).

Belgin-Henry, A., 2018. 'A Mobile Dialogue of an Immobile Saint: St. Symeon the Younger, Divine Liturgy, and the Architectural Setting', in J. Bogdanović (ed.), *Perceptions of the Body and Sacred Space in Late Antiquity and Byzantium* (New York), pp. 149–65.

Belgin-Henry, A., 2019. 'The Bishop, the Saint, and their Site: The Wondrous Mountain in an Antiochene Context', in S. Yalman and A. Hilâl Uğurlu (eds), *Sacred Spaces and Urban Networks* (Istanbul), pp. 51–66.

Bell, P. N., 2013. *Social Conflict in the Age of Justinian* (Oxford).

Benjelloun, Y., De Sigoyer, J., Carlut, J., Hubert-Ferrari, A., Dessales, H., Pamir, H. and Karabacak, V., 2015. 'Characterisation of Building Materials from the Aqueduct of Antioch-on-the-Orontes (Turkey)', *Comptes rendus Geoscience* 347, pp. 170–80.

Bériou, N., Caseau, B., and Rigaux, D., (eds), 2009. *Pratiques de l'eucharistie dans les églises d'Orient et d'Occident (Antiquité et Moyen Âge)*, 2 vols (Paris).

Betancourt, R., 2020. *Byzantine Intersectionality: Sexuality, Gender and Race in the Middle Ages* (Princeton).

Binggeli, A., 2009. 'Les stylites et l'eucharistie', in Bériou, Caseau, and Rigaux 2009, I, pp. 421–44.

Binns, J., 1996. *Ascetics and Ambassadors of Christ: The Monasteries of Palestine 341–631* (Oxford).

Bitton-Ashkelony, B. and Kofsky, A. (eds), 2004. *Christian Gaza in Late Antiquity* (Leiden).

Blaudeau, P., 1997. 'Le voyage de Damien d'Alexandrie vers Antioche puis Constantinople (579–580)—Motivations et objectifs', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 63, pp. 333–61.

Blersch, H. G., 2001. *La colonne au carrefour du monde: l'ascension de Siméon, premier stylite* (Bégrolles en Mauges). Trans. from German into French by G. Bret.

Boero, D., 2015. 'The Context of Production of the Vatican Manuscript of the *Syriac Life of Symeon the Stylite*', *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 18.2, pp. 319–59.

Boero, D., 2015b. 'Symeon and the Making of the Stylite: The Construction of Sanctity in Late Antique Syria', unpublished PhD dissertation (University of Southern California, 2015).

Boero, D. and Kuper, C., 2020. 'Steps towards a Study of Symeon Stylites the Younger and his Saint's Cult', *Studies in Late Antiquity* 4.4, pp. 370–407.

Booth, P., 2011. 'Orthodox and Heretic in the Early Byzantine Cult(s) of Saints Cosmas and Damian', in Sarris, Dal Santo, and Booth 2011, pp. 114–28.

Booth, P., 2014. *Crisis of Empire: Doctrine and Dissent at the End of Late Antiquity* (Berkeley).

Booth, P., 2017. 'Towards the Coptic Church: The Making of the Severan Episcopate', *Millennium* 14.1, pp. 151–90.

Booth, P., 2018. 'A Circle of Egyptian Bishops at the end of Roman Rule (c. 600): Texts and Contexts', *Le Muséon* 131.1–2, pp. 21–72.

Børtnes, J. and Hägg, T. (eds), 2006. *Gregory of Nazianzus: Images and Reflections* (Copenhagen).

Bowden, W., Gutteridge A., and Machado, C. (eds), 2006. *Social and Political Life in Late Antiquity* (Leiden).

Bowden, W., Lavan, L., and Machado, C. (eds), 2004. *Recent Research on the Late Antique Countryside* (Leiden).

Bowersock, G. W., 1990. *Hellenism in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge).

Bowersock, G. W., 1994. *Studies on the Eastern Roman Empire: Social, Economic and Administrative History, Religion, Historiography* (Goldbach).

Bowersock, G. W., 1996. 'The Vanishing Paradigm of the Fall of Rome', *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 49.8, pp. 29–43.

Bowersock, G. W., 2006. *Mosaics as History: The Near East from Late Antiquity to Islam* (London).

Boyd, S. and Mango, M. M. (eds), 1992. *Ecclesiastical Silver Plate in Sixth-Century Byzantium* (Dumbarton Oaks).

Brakke, D., 1989. 'Shenute: On Cleaving to Profitable Things', *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 20, pp. 115–41.

Brakke, D., 1995. *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism* (Oxford).

Brakke, D., 1997. 'Athanasius of Alexandria and the Cult of the Holy Dead', *Studia Patristica* 32, pp. 12–18.

Brakke, D., 2001. 'The Making of Monastic Demonology: Three Ascetic Teachers on Withdrawal and Resistance', *Church History* 70.1, pp. 19–48.

Brakke, D., 2006. *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, MA).

Brakke, D., 2007. 'Shenoute, Weber, and the Monastic Prophet: Ancient and Modern Articulations of Ascetic Authority', in Camplani and Filoramo 2007, pp. 47–73.

Brakke, D., 2008. 'Care for the Poor, Fear of Poverty, and Love of Money: Evagrius Ponticus on the Monk's Economic Vulnerability', in Holman 2008, pp. 76–87.

Brakke, D., 2013. 'Reading the New Testament and Transforming the Self in Evagrius of Pontus', in Weidemann 2013, pp. 284–99.

Brändle, R., 2008. 'This Sweetest Passage: Matthew 25:31–46 and Assistance to the Poor in the Homilies of John Chrysostom', in Holman 2008, pp. 127–58.

Brands, G., 2018. 'Scott Redford (ed.): Antioch on the Orontes. Early Explorations in the City of Mosaics', *Gnomon* 90.1, pp. 70–4 (review article).

Brasse, C., 2010. 'Von der Stadtmauer zur Stadtgeschichte. Das Befestigungssystem von Antiochia am Orontes', in J. Lorentzen, F. Pirson, P. Schneider, and U. Wulf-Rheidt (eds), *Neue Forschungen zu antiken Stadtbefestigungen im östlichen Mittelmeerraum und im Vorderen Orient, BYZAS* 10, pp. 261–82.

Braun, T. E. D. and Radner, J. B. (eds), 2005. *The Lisbon Earthquake of 1755: Representations and Reactions* (Liverpool).

Bremmer, J. N., 2017. 'From Heroes to Saints and from Martyrological to Hagiographical Discourse', in F. Heinzer, J. Leonhard, and R. von den Hoff (eds), *Sakralität und Heldentum* (Würzburg), pp. 35–66.

Bremmer, J. N., 2019. 'Athanasius' *Life of Antony:* Marginality, Spatiality and Mediality', in L. Feldt and J. N. Bremmer (eds), *Marginality, Media, and Mutations of Religious Authority in the History of Christianity* (Leuven), pp. 23–45.

Brenk, B., 2004. 'Monasteries as Rural Settlements: Patron-Dependence or Self-Sufficiency?', in Bowden, Lavan, and Machado 2004, pp. 447–76.

Brennan, B. R., 1976. 'Dating Athanasius' "Vita Antonii"', *Vigiliae Christianae* 30.1, pp. 52–4.

Brennan, B. R., 1985. 'Athanasius' "Vita Antonii". A Sociological Interpretation', *Vigiliae Christianae* 39.3, pp. 209–27.

Brock, S. P., 1973. 'Early Christian Asceticism', *Numen* 20, pp. 1–19.

Brock, S. P., 1985. 'A Monothelite Florilegium in Syriac', in C. Laga, J. A. Munitiz, and L. Van Rompay (eds), *After Chalcedon: Studies in Theology and Church History offered to Professor Albert Van Roey for his seventieth birthday*, pp. 35–45, reprinted as article XIV in S. Brock, *Studies in Syriac Christianity: History, Literature and Theology* (Aldershot, 1992).

Brock, S. P., 1992. 'Christians in the Sasanian Empire: A Case of Divided Loyalties', *Studies in Church History* 18, pp. 1–19.

Brock, S. P. and Harvey, S. A., 1987. *Holy Women of the Syrian Orient* (Berkeley).

Brooks, E. W., 1929. 'The Patriarch Paul of Antioch and the Alexandrine Schism of 575', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 40, pp. 468–76.

Brown, P., 1971. 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', *The Journal of Roman Studies* 61, pp. 80–101.

Brown, P., 1976a. 'Town, Village and Holy Man: The Case of Syria', in D. M. Pippidi (ed.), *Assimilation et résistance à la culture gréco-romaine dans le monde ancien* (Bucharest), pp. 213–20.

Brown, P., 1976b. 'Eastern and Western Christendom in Late Antiquity: A Parting of the Way', *Studies in Church History* 13, pp. 1–24.

Brown, P., 1983. 'The Saint as Exemplar in Late Antiquity', *Representations* 2, pp. 1–25.

Brown, P., 1995. *Authority and the Sacred: Aspects of the Christianisation of the Roman World* (Cambridge).

Brown, P., 1998. 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity: 1971–1997', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6, pp. 353–76.

Brown, P., 2000. 'Enjoying the Saints in Late Antiquity', *Early Medieval Europe* 9.1, pp. 1–24.

Brown, P., 2002. *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (Hanover, NH).

Brown, P., 2012. *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350–550 AD* (Princeton).

Browning, R., 1981. 'The "Low-Level" Saint's Life in the Early Byzantine World', in Hackel 1981, pp. 117–27.

Brubaker, L., 1998. 'Icons before Iconoclasm?', in *Morfologie Sociali e Culturali in Europa Fra Tarda Antichità e Alto Medioevo*, Vol. 2: *Settimane di Studio Del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo* 45, pp. 1215–54.

Brubaker, L. and Haldon, J., 2001. *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era (ca 680–850): The Sources, an Annotated Survey* (Aldershot).

Brubaker, L. and Haldon, J., 2011. *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era, c. 680–850: A History* (Cambridge).

Burrows, M. S., 1987. 'On the Visibility of God in the Holy Man: A Reconsideration of the Role of the Apa in the Pachomian Vitae', *Vigiliae Christianae* 41.1, pp. 11–33.

Burrus, V., 2003. 'Macrina's Tattoo', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 33.3, pp. 403–17.

Burrus, V., 2006. 'Life after Death: The Martyrdom of Gorgonia and the Birth of Female Hagiography', in Børtnes and Hägg 2006, pp. 153–70.

Burton-Christie, D., 1993. *The Word in the Desert: Scripture and the Quest for Holiness in Early Christian Monasticism* (Oxford).

Burton-Christie, D., 1999. 'The Place of the Heart: Geography and Spirituality in the *Life of Antony*', in H. A. Luckman and L. Kulzer (eds), *Purity of Heart in Early Ascetic and Monastic Literature: Essays in Honour of Juana Raasch, O. S. B.* (Collegeville, MN), pp. 45–65.

Bury, J. B., 1897. 'Johannes Malalas: the Text of the Codex Baroccianus', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 6, pp. 219–30.

Butcher, K., 2003. *Roman Syria and the Near East* (London).

Cabouret, B., Gatier, P.-L., and Saliou, C. (eds), 2004. *Antioche de Syrie: histoire, images et traces de la ville antique* (Lyons).

Cain, A., 2016. *The Greek Historia Monachorum in Aegypto: Monastic Hagiography in the Late Fourth Century* (Oxford).

Caires, V. A., 1982. 'Evagrius Scholasticus: a Literary Analysis', *Byzantinische Forschungen* 8, pp. 29–50.

Callot, O., 2013. 'Les pressoirs du Massif Calcaire: une vision différente', in Charpentier and Puech 2013, pp. 97–109.

Callot, O. and Gatier, P.-L., 2004. 'Les stylites de l'Antiochène', in Cabouret, Gatier, and Saliou 2004, pp. 573–96.

Cameron, A. D. E., 1976. *Circus Factions: Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium* (Oxford).

Cameron, A. D. E., 2007. 'Poets and Pagans in Byzantine Egypt', in R. S. Bagnall (ed.), *Egypt in the Byzantine World 300–700* (Cambridge), pp. 21–46.

Cameron, A. M., 1978. 'The Theotokos in Sixth-Century Constantinople: A City Finds its Symbol', *Journal of Theological Studies* 29, pp. 79–108.

Cameron, A. M., 1979. 'Images of Authority: Elites and Icons in Late Sixth-Century Byzantium', *Past and Present* 84, pp. 3–35.

Cameron, A. M., 1988. 'Eustratius' *Life* of the Patriarch Eutychius and the Fifth Ecumenical Council', in *Καθηγητρία: Essays presented to Joan Hussey for her 80th Birthday* (Camberley), pp. 225–47.

Cameron, A. M., 1990. 'Models of the Past in the Late Sixth Century: The Life of the Patriarch Eutychius', in G. Clarke (ed.), *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity* (Rushcutters Bay), pp. 205–23.

Cameron, A. M., 1991a. *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Berkeley).

Cameron, A. M., 1991b. 'Disputations, Polemical Literature and the Formation of Opinion in the Early Byzantine Period', in G. J. Reinink and H. L. J. Vanstiphout (eds), *Dispute Poems and Dialogues in the Ancient and Mediaeval Near East: Forms and Types of Literary Debates in Semitic and Related Literatures* (Leuven), pp. 91–108.

Cameron, A. M., 1997. 'Eusebius' *Vita Constantini* and the Construction of Constantine', in Edwards and Swain 1997, pp. 145–75.

Cameron, A. M., 1999. 'On Defining the Holy Man', in Howard-Johnston and Hayward 1999, pp. 27–43.

Cameron, A. M., 2000. 'Form and Meaning: The *Vita Constantini* and the *Vita Antonii*', in Hägg and Rousseau 2000, pp. 72–88.

Cameron, A. M., 2011. 'The Anxiety of Images: Meanings and Material Objects', in A. Lymberopoulou (ed.), *Images of the Byzantine World: Visions, Messages and Meanings. Studies presented to Leslie Brubaker* (Farnham), pp. 47–56.

Cameron, A. M., 2014. 'Introduction: The Discourses of Gillian Clark', in Harrison, Humfress, and Sandwell 2014, pp. 1–10.

Cameron, A. M., 2016. 'Late Antiquity and Byzantium: An Identity Problem', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 40.1, pp. 27–37.

Cameron, A. M., 2017. 'Late Antique Apocalyptic: A Context for the Qur'an?', in H. Amirav, E. Grypeou, and G. G. Stroumsa (eds), *Visions of the End: Apocalypticism and Eschatology in the Abrahamic Religions, 6th–8th Centuries* (Leuven), pp. 1–19.

Campbell, S., 1988. *The Mosaics of Antioch* (Toronto).

Camplani, A. and Filoramo, G. (eds), 2007. *Foundations of Power and Conflicts of Authority in Late-Antique Monasticism* (Leuven).

Caner, D., 2002. *Wandering, Begging Monks: Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley).

Caner, D., 2006. 'Towards a Miraculous Economy: Christian Gifts and Material "Blessings" in Late Antiquity', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 14.3, pp. 329–77.

Caner, D., 2008. 'Wealth, Stewardship and Charitable "Blessings" in Early Monasticism', in Holman 2008, pp. 221–42.

Caner, D., 2009. 'Charitable Ministrations (*Diakoniai*), Monasticism, and the Social Aesthetic of Sixth-Century Byzantium', in Frenkel and Lev 2009, pp. 45–73.

Cardman, F., 2001. 'Whose Life is it? The *Vita Macrinae* of Gregory of Nyssa', *Studia Patristica* 37, pp. 33–50.

Cardman, F., 2008. 'Poverty and Wealth as Theater: John Chrysostom's Homilies on Lazarus and the Rich Man', in Holman 2008, pp. 159–75.

Cartwright, S., 2016. 'Athanasius' "Vita Antonii" as Political Theology: The Call of Heavenly Citizenship', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 67.2, pp. 241–64.

Casana, J., 2004. 'The Archaeological Landscape of Late Roman Antioch', in Sandwell and Huskinson 2004, pp. 102–25.

Casana, J., 2014. 'The Late Roman Landscape of the Northern Levant: A View from Tell Qarqur and the Lower Orontes River Valley', *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 33.2, pp. 193–219.

Casana, J. J. and Wilkinson, T. J., 2005. 'Settlement and Landscape in the Amuq Region', in K. A. Yener (ed.), *The Amuq Valley Regional Projects*, Vol. I: *(Surveys in the Plain of Antioch and Orontes Delta, Turkey, 1995–2002)* (Chicago), pp. 25–65.

Caseau (-Chevallier), B., 2003. 'Syméon Stylite le Jeune (521-592): un cas de sainte anorexie?', *Kentron* 19 (2003), pp. 179–203.

Caseau (-Chevallier), B., 2005. 'Syméon Stylite l'Ancien entre puanteur et parfum', *Revue des études byzantines* 63, pp. 71–96.

Caseau (-Chevallier), B., 2009. '*Sancta sanctis*. Normes et gestes de la communion entre Antiquité et haut Moyen Âge', in Bériou, Caseau, and Rigaux 2009, I, pp. 371–420.

Catafygiotu Topping, E., 1978. 'On Earthquakes and Fires: Romanos' Encomium to Justinian', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 71.1, pp. 22–35.

Chadwick, H., 1974. 'John Moschus and his Friend Sophronius the Sophist', *Journal of Theological Studies* 25.1, pp. 41–74.

Chadwick, H., 1981. 'Pachomios and the Idea of Sanctity', in Hackel 1981, pp. 11–24.

Charpentier, G. and Puech, V. (eds), 2013. *Villes et campagnes aux rives de la Méditerranée ancienne. Hommages à Georges Tate, Topoi Supplement 12.*

Chitty, D., 1964. Review of Van den Ven 1960, *Journal of Theological Studies* 15, pp. 179–81.

Chitty, D., 1966. *The Desert a City: An Introduction to the Study of Egyptian and Palestinian Monasticism under the Christian Empire* (Oxford).

Christo, G. G., 1998. *St. John Chrysostom: On Repentance and Almsgiving* (Washington, DC).

Chryssavgis, J. and Penkett, P., 2002. *Abba Isaiah of Scetis: Ascetic Discourses* (Kalamazoo, MI).

Clark, E. A., 1986. *Ascetic Piety and Women's Faith: Essays on Late Antique Christianity* (Lewiston).

Clark, E. A., 1998. 'Holy Women, Holy Words: Early Christian Women, Social History, and the "Linguistic Turn"', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6.3, pp. 413–30.

Clark, E. A., 2013. 'Introduction', in Weidemann 2013, pp. 11–18.

Clark, G., 1993. *Women in Late Antiquity: Pagan and Christian Lifestyles* (Oxford).

Clark, G., 1995. 'Women and Asceticism in Late Antiquity: The Refusal of Status and Gender', in R. Valantasis and V. L. Wimbush (eds), *Asceticism* (New York), pp. 33–48.

Cloke, G. 1995. *This Female Man of God: Women and Spiritual Power in the Patristic Age, AD 350–450* (London).

Constantinou, S., 2004. 'Subgenre and Gender in Saints' Lives', in Odorico and Panagiotis 2004, pp. 411–23.

Constantinou, S., 2005. *Female Corporeal Performances: Reading the Body in Byzantine Passions and Lives of Holy Women* (Uppsala).

Constas, N., 2001. '"To Sleep, Perchance to Dream": The Middle State of Souls in Patristic and Byzantine Literature', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55, pp. 91–124.

Cook, J., 2019. *Preaching and Popular Christianity: Reading the Sermons of John Chrysostom* (Oxford).

Coon, L. L., 1997. *Sacred Fictions: Holy Women and Hagiography in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia).

Cooper, K., 1996. *The Virgin and the Bride: Idealised Womanhood in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA).

Cox, P., 1983. *Biography in Late Antiquity: A Quest for the Holy Man* (Berkeley).

Cremonesi, C., 2008. 'Sacrifice and Ascesis: the Taboo of Meat and the Holy Child', in V. Mehl and P. Brulé (eds), *Le sacrifice antique: vestiges, procédures et stratégies* (Rennes), pp. 253–64.

Cremonesi, C., 2011. 'The Meaning of Illness: Metamorphoses of Wounds from Symeon the Elder to Symeon the Younger', in F. Jullien and M.-J. Pierre (eds), *Monachismes d'Orient: images, échanges, influences: hommage à Antoine Guillaumont* (Turnhout), pp. 239–52.

Cribiore, R., 2007. *The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch* (Princeton).

Croke, B., 1990. 'Malalas, the Man and his Work', in Jeffreys et al. 1990, pp. 1–25.

Croke, B., 1995. *The Chronicle of Marcellinus* (Sydney).

Csepregi, I., 2002. 'The Miracles of Saints Cosmas and Damian: Characteristics of Dream Healing', *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 8, pp. 89–121.

Csepregi, I., 2005. 'Mysteries for the Uninitiated. The Role and Symbolism of the Eucharist in Miraculous Dream Healing', in I. Perczel, R. Forrai, and G. Geréby (eds), *The Eucharist in Theology and Philosophy: Issues of Doctrinal History in East and West from the Patristic Age to the Reformation* (Leuven), pp. 97–130.

Csepregi, I., 2010. 'The Theological Other: Religious and Narrative Identity in Fifth to Seventh Century Byzantine Miracle Collections', in A. Marinkovic and T. Vedriš (eds), *Identity and Alterity in Hagiography and the Cult of Saints* (Zagreb), pp. 59–72.

Csepregi, I., 2012. 'Changes in Dream Patterns between Antiquity and Byzantium: The Impact of Medical Learning on Dream Healing', in I. Csepregi and C. Burnett (eds), *Ritual Healing: Magic, Ritual and Medical Therapy from Antiquity until the Early Modern Period* (Florence), pp. 131–46.

Csepregi, I., 2013. 'Who Is Behind Incubation Stories?', in S. M. Oberhelman (ed.), *Dreams, Healing, and Medicine in Greece: From Antiquity to the Present* (Farnham, 2013), pp. 161–87.

Cummings, J. T., 1984. 'The Holy Death-Bed Saint and Penitent: Variation of a Theme', in Spira 1984, pp. 241–63.

Cunningham, M., 1986. 'Preaching and the Community', in R. Morris (ed.), *Church and People in Byzantium* (Birmingham), pp. 29–47.

Cunningham, M., 1995. 'Innovation or Mimesis in Byzantine Sermons?', in A. R. Littlewood (ed.), *Originality in Byzantine Literature, Art and Music* (Oxford), pp. 67–80.

Cunningham, M., 1996. 'The Sixth Century: A Turning-Point for Byzantine Homiletics?', in Allen and Jeffreys 1996, pp. 176–86.

Cunningham, M., 1997. 'Andrew of Crete's Homilies on Lazarus and Palm Sunday: The Preacher and his Audience', *Studia Patristica* 31, pp. 22–41.

Cunningham, M., 2008. 'Homilies', in E. Jeffreys, J. F. Haldon, and R. Cormack (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford), pp. 872–81.

Cunningham, M., 2011. 'Messages in Context: The Reading of Sermons in Byzantine Churches and Monasteries', in A. Lymberopoulou (ed.), *Images of the Byzantine World: Visions, Messages, and Meanings; Studies Presented to Leslie Brubaker* (Farnham), pp. 83–98.

Cunningham, M. B. and Allen, P. (eds), 1998. *Preacher and Audience: Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine Homiletics* (Leiden).

Dagron, G., 1970. 'Les moines et la ville: le monachisme à Constantinople jusqu'au concile de Chalcédoine (451)', *Travaux et Mémoires* 4, pp. 229–76.

Dagron, G., 1978. *Vie et miracles de sainte Thècle* (Brussels).

Dagron, G., 1981. 'Quand la terre tremble . . .', *Travaux et Mémoires* 8, pp. 87–103.

Dagron, G., 1985. 'Rêver de dieu et parler de soi: la rêve et son interprétation d'après les sources byzantines', in T. Gregory (ed.), *I sogni nel medioevo* (Rome), pp. 37–55.

Dagron, G., 1992. 'L'ombre d'un doute: l'hagiographie en question, VIe–XIe siècle', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 46, pp. 59–68.

Dahari, U., 2000. *Monastic Settlements in South Sinai in the Byzantine Period: The Archaeological Remains* (Jerusalem).

Daley, B. E. (ed.), 1998. *On the Dormition of Mary: Early Patristic Homilies* (Crestwood, NY).

Daley, B. E., 2001. '"At the Hour of Our Death": Mary's Dormition and Christian Dying in Late Patristic and Early Byzantine Literature', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55, pp. 71–89.

Dal Santo, M., 2011a. 'The God-Protected Empire? Scepticism towards the Cult of Saints in Early Byzantium', in Sarris, Dal Santo, and Booth 2011, pp. 129–49.

Dal Santo, M., 2011b. 'Imperial Power and its Subversion in Eustratius of Constantinople's Life and Martyrdom of Golinduch (c. 602)', *Byzantion* 81, pp. 138–76.

Dal Santo, M., 2011c. 'Text, Image, and the "Visionary Body" in Early Byzantine Hagiography: Incubation and the Rise of the Christian Image Cult', *Journal of Late Antiquity* 4.1, pp. 31–54.

Dal Santo, M., 2012. *Debating the Saints' Cult in the Age of Gregory the Great* (Oxford).

Davis, S. J., 2001. *The Cult of Saint Thecla: A Tradition of Women's Piety in Late Antiquity* (Oxford).

Davis, S. J., 2013. 'Counting the Race and Receiving the Crown: 2 Timothy 4:7–8 in Early Christian Monastic Epitaphs at Kellia and Pherme', in Weidemann 2013, pp. 334–73.

Dawes, E. and Baynes, N. H., 1948. *Three Byzantine Saints* (Oxford).

Decker, M., 2009. *Tilling the Hateful Earth: Agricultural Production and Trade in the Late Antique East* (Oxford).

De Giorgi, A. U., 2015. 'The Princeton Excavations in Antakya, 1932–40' (Book Review), *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 28, pp. 873–6.

De Giorgi, A. U., 2016. *Antioch: From the Seleucid Era to the Islamic Conquest* (Cambridge).

Delehaye, H., 1923. *Les saints stylites* (Brussels).

Delierneux, N., 2014. 'The Literary Portrait of Byzantine Female Saints', in Efthymiadis 2014a, pp. 363–86.

Delouis, O., Mossakovska-Gaubert, M., and Peters-Custot, A. (eds), 2019. *Les mobilités monastiques en Orient et en Occident de l'Antiquité tardive au Moyen Âge (IVe–XVe siècle)* (Rome).

Déroche, V., 1995. *Études sur Léontios de Néapolis* (Uppsala).

Déroche, V., 1996. 'Quelques interrogations à propos de la *Vie de Syméon Stylite le Jeune*', *Eranos* 94, pp. 65–83.

Déroche, V., 2000. 'Tensions et contradictions dans les recueils de miracles de la première époque Byzantine', in Aigle 2000, pp. 145–66.
Déroche, V., 2002. 'Représentations de l'Eucharistie dans la haute époque byzantine', *Travaux et Mémoires* 14, pp. 167–80.
Déroche, V., 2004. 'La forme de l'informe: la Vie de Théodore de Sykéôn et la Vie de Syméon Stylite le Jeune', in Odorico and Panagiotis 2004, pp. 367–85.
Déroche, V., 2006. 'Vraiment anargyres? Don et contredon dans les recueils de miracles proto-byzantins', in P. Maraval, B. Caseau-Chevallier, J.-C. Cheynet, and V. Déroche (eds), *Pèlerinages et lieux saints dans l'antiquité et le moyen âge* (Paris), pp. 153–8.
Déroche, V., 2009. 'Eucharistie et localisation du sacré à Byzance (VIe–VIIIe siècle)', in Bériou, Caseau, and Rigaux 2009, I, pp. 127–38.
Déroche, V., 2011. 'Forms and Functions of Anti-Jewish Polemics: Polymorphy, Polysémy', in R. Bonfil, O. Irshai, G. G. Stroumsa, and R. Talgam (eds), *Jews in Byzantium: Dialectics of Minority and Majority Cultures* (Leiden), pp. 535–48.
Déroche, V., 2012. 'Un recueil inédit de miracles de Cyr et Jean dans le *Koutloumousiou* 37', *Rivista di studi Bizantini e Neoellenici* 49, pp. 199–220.
Déroche, V. and Lesieur, B., 2010. 'Notes d'hagiographie byzantine: Daniel le Stylite—Marcel l'Acémète—Hypatios de Rufinianes—Auxentios de Bithynie', *Analecta Bollandiana* 128, pp. 283–95.
de Ste. Croix, G. E. M., 1981. *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World from the Archaic Age to the Arab Conquests* (London).
Dillon, M. P. J., 1994. 'The Didactic Nature of the Epidaurian Iamata', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 101, pp. 239–60.
Dimitrov, T., 2015. 'Fever-Demon or Plague-Demon? Toward a New Interpretation of v. Sym. Styl. J. 231 75–77', *Études balkaniques* 54.1, pp. 15–22.
Di Segni, L., 2001. 'Monk and Society: The Case of Palestine', in Patrich 2001, pp. 31–6.
Djobadze, W. Z., 1976. *Materials for the Study of Georgian Monasteries in the Western Environs of Antioch on the Orontes* (Leuven).
Djobadze, W. Z., 1986. *Archaeological Investigations in the Region West of Antioch on-the-Orontes* (Stuttgart).
Dobbins, J. J., 2000. 'The Houses at Antioch', in Kondoleon 2000, pp. 51–61.
Doran, R., 1984. 'Compositional Comments on the Syriac Version of the Life of Simeon Stylites', *Analecta Bollandiana* 102, pp. 35–48.
Doran, R., 1992. *The Lives of Simeon Stylites* (Kalamazoo, MI).
Doran, R., 2006. *Stewards of the Poor: The Man of God, Rabbula, and Hiba in Fifth-Century Edessa*.
Downey, G., 1938. 'Ephraemius, Patriarch of Antioch', *Church History* 7.4, pp. 364–70.
Downey, G., 1961. *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest* (Princeton).
Drewer, L., 1991–2. 'Saints and their Families in Byzantine Art', in *Deltion tēs Christianikēs Archaiologikēs Hetaireias* 16, pp. 259–70.
Drijvers, H. J. W., 1981. 'Hellenistic and Oriental Origins', in Hackel 1981, pp. 25–33.
Drijvers, H. J. W., 1996. 'The Man of God of Edessa, Bishop Rabbula, and the Urban Poor: Church and Society in the Fifth Century', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 4.2, pp. 235–48.
Drijvers, H. J. W., 1999. 'Rabbula, Bishop of Edessa: Spiritual Authority and Secular Power', in Drijvers and Watt 1999, pp. 139–54.
Drijvers, J. W. and Watt, J. W. (eds), 2009. *Portraits of Spiritual Authority: Religious Power in Early Christianity, Byzantium and the Christian Orient* (Leiden).

Eade, J. and Sallnow, M. J. (eds), 1991. *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage* (London).

Eastman, D. L., 2013. 'The Matriarch as Model: Sarah, the Cult of the Saints, and Social Control in a Syriac Homily of Pseudo-Ephrem', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 21.2, pp. 241–59.

Eastmond, A., 1999. 'Body vs. Column: the Cults of St Symeon Stylites', in L. James (ed.), *Desire and Denial in Byzantium* (Aldershot), pp. 87–100.

Edelstein, E. J. and Edelstein, L. (eds), 1975. *Asclepius: A Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies* (New York).

Edwards, M. J. and Swain, S. (eds), 1997. *Portraits: Biographical Representation in the Greek and Latin Literature of the Roman Empire* (Oxford).

Efthymiadis, S., 2006a. 'New Developments in Hagiography: The Rediscovery of Byzantine Hagiography', in his *Hagiography in Byzantium: Literature, Social History and Cult* (Farnham, 2011), article I, originally published in E. Jeffreys (ed.), *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies, London 2006*, Vol. 1: *Plenary Papers* (Ashgate, 2006), pp. 157–71.

Efthymiadis, S., 2006b. 'Two Gregories and Three Genres: Autobiography, Autohagiography and Hagiography', in Børtnes and Hägg 2006, pp. 239–56.

Efthymiadis, S., 2011a. *Hagiography in Byzantium: Literature, Social History and Cult* (Farnham).

Efthymiadis, S., 2011b. *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, Vol. I: *Periods and Places* (Farnham).

Efthymiadis, S., 2014a. *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, Vol. II: *Genres and Contexts* (Farnham).

Efthymiadis, S., 2014b. 'Collections of Miracles (Fifth-Fifteenth Centuries)', in Efthymiadis 2014a, pp. 103–42.

Efthymiadis, S., 2014c. 'Introduction', in Efthymiadis 2014a, pp. 1–21.

Efthymiadis, S., Déroche, V., Binggeli, A., and Aïnalis, Z., 2011. 'Greek Hagiography in Late Antiquity (Fourth-Seventh Centuries)', in Efthymiadis 2011b, pp. 35–94.

Efthymiadis, S. and Kalogeras, N., 2014. 'Audience, Language and Patronage in Byzantine Hagiography', in Efthymiadis 2014b, pp. 247–84.

Ehrhard, A., 1936–52. *Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen und homiletischen Literatur der griechischen Kirche von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts*, 3 vols (Leipzig, 1936–52).

Elderkin, G. W., et al., 1934–72. *Antioch-on-the-Orontes*, 5 vols (Princeton).

Elm, S., 1996. *Virgins of God: The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford).

Elm, S., 2006. 'Gregory's Women: Creating a Philosopher's Family', in Børtnes and Hägg 2006, pp. 171–91.

Emmel, S., 2004. *Shenoute's Literary Corpus*, 2 vols (Leuven).

Emmel, S., 2008a. 'Shenoute of Atripe and the Christian Destruction of Temples in Egypt: Rhetoric and Reality', in J. Hahn (ed.), *From Temple to Church: Destruction and Renewal of Local Cultic Topography in Late Antiquity* (Leiden), pp. 161–202.

Emmel, S., 2008b. 'Shenoute's Place in the History of Monasticism', in Gabra and Takla 2008, pp. 31–46.

Ernst, A. M., 2009. *Martha from the Margins: The Authority of Martha in Early Christian Tradition* (Leiden).

Erol, O. and Pirazzoli, P. A., 1992. 'Seleucia Pieria: An Ancient Harbour Submitted to Two Successive Uplifts', *The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 21.4, pp. 317–27.

Escolan, P., 1999. *Monachisme et église: le monachisme syrien du IVe au VIIe siècle: un monachisme charismatique* (Paris).
Every, G., 1976. 'Toll Gates on the Air Way', *Eastern Churches Review* 8, pp. 139–51.
Fauchon-Claudon, C., 2019. 'Accueil et surveillance des moines en circulation en grande Syrie à la fin de l'antiquité', in Delouis, Mossakovska-Gaubert, and Peters-Custot 2019, pp. 161–96.
Feissel, D., 1991. 'Noms de villages de Syrie du Nord. Élements grecs et sémitiques', in *Ho Hellēnismos stēn Anatolē* (Athens), pp. 287–302.
Feissel, D., 1992. 'Notes d'épigraphie chrétienne (VIII)', *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 116, pp. 383–407.
Festugière, A. J., 1959. *Antioche païenne et chrétienne* (Paris).
Festugière, A. J., 1970. *Vie de Théodore de Sykeôn*, 2 vols (Brussels).
Festugière, A. J., 1971. *Saint Thècle, saints Côme et Damien, saints Cyr et Jean (extraits), saint Georges* (Paris).
Festugière, A. J., 1973. 'Types épidauriens de miracles dans la Vie de Syméon Stylite le Jeune', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 93, pp. 70–3.
Festugière, A. J. and Ryden, L. (eds), 1974. *Léontius de Néapolis: Vie de Syméon le Fou et Vie de Jean de Chypre* (Paris).
Finn, D., 2018. 'Job as Exemplary Father According to John Chrysostom', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 26.2, pp. 275–305.
Finn, R., 2006. 'Portraying the Poor: Descriptions of Poverty in Christian Texts from the Late Roman Empire', in M. Atkins and R. Osborne (eds), *Poverty in the Roman World* (Cambridge), pp. 130–44.
Flusin, B., 1983. *Miracle et histoire dans l'œuvre de Cyrille de Scythopolis* (Paris).
Flusin, B., 1991. 'Démons et Sarrasins: l'auteur et le propos de *Diègèmata stèriktika* d'Anastase le Sinaïte', *Travaux et Mémoires* 11, pp. 381–409.
Flusin, B., 1992. *Saint Anastase le Perse et l'histoire de la Palestine au début du VIIe siècle*, 2 vols (Paris).
Flusin, B., 1993. 'Syméon et les philologues, ou la mort du stylite', in C. Jolivet-Lévy, M. Kaplan, and J.-P. Sodini (eds), *Les saints et leur sanctuaire à Byzance: textes, images et monuments* (Paris), pp. 1–23.
Flusin, B., 2001. 'Un hagiographe saisi par l'histoire: Cyrille de Scythopolis et la mesure du temps', in Patrich 2001, pp. 119–26.
Flusin, B., 2007. 'Saint Sabas: un leader monastique à l'autorité contestée', in Camplani and Filoramo 2007, pp. 195–216.
Foat, M. E., 1993. 'Shenute: Discourse in the Presence of Eraklammon', *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 24, pp. 113–31.
Forness, P. M., 2018. *Preaching Christology in the Roman Near East: A Study of Jacob of Serugh* (Oxford).
Foss, C., 1995. 'The Near Eastern Countryside in Late Antiquity: A Review Article', in J. H. Humphrey (ed.), *The Roman and Byzantine Near East: Some Recent Archaeological Research*, vol. 1 (Ann Arbor), pp. 213–34.
Foss, C., 1997. 'Syria in Transition, A.D. 550–750: An Archaeological Approach', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 51, pp. 189–269.
Fowden, E. K., 1999. *The Barbarian Plain: Saint Sergius between Rome and Iran* (Berkeley).
Fowden, G., 1982. 'The Pagan Holy Man in Late Antique Society', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 102, pp. 33–59.
Frank, G., 2000. 'Macrina's Scar: Homeric Allusion and Heroic Identity in Gregory of Nyssa's Life of Macrina', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 8.4, pp. 511–30.

Frank, G., 2019. 'Traveling Stylites? Rethinking the Pillar Saint's Stasis in the Christian East', in Delouis, Mossakovska-Gaubert, and Peters-Custot 2019, pp. 261–73.

Frankfurter, D., 1998. *Religion in Roman Egypt: Assimilation and Resistance* (Princeton).

Frankfurter, D., 2000. '"Things Unbefitting Christians": Violence and Christianisation in Fifth-Century Panopolis', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 8.2, pp. 273–95.

Frankfurter, D., 2006. 'Hagiography and the Reconstruction of Local Religion in Late Antique Egypt: Memories, Inventions, and Landscapes', in *Church History and Religious Culture* 86, pp. 13–37.

Frend, W. H. C., 1972. *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement* (Cambridge).

Frenkel, M. and Lev, Y. (eds), 2009. *Charity and Giving in Monotheistic Religions* (Berlin).

Gabra, G. and Takla, H. N. (eds), 2008. *Christianity and Monasticism in Upper Egypt:* Vol. 1: *Akhim and Sohag* (Cairo).

Gaddis, M., 2005. *There Is No Crime for Those Who Have Christ: Religious Violence in the Christian Roman Empire* (Berkeley).

Garzya, A., 1985. 'Visages de l'hellénisme dans le monde byzantine (IVe–XIIe siècles), *Byzantion* 55, pp. 463–82.

Gascou, J., 1991. 'Monasteries, Economic Activities of', in A. S. Atiya (ed.), *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, 8 vols (New York), V, pp. 1639–45.

Gatier, P.-L., 1988. 'Un témoignage sur des églises d'Antioche', *Syria* 65, pp. 383–8.

Gatier, P.-L., 1994. 'Villages de Proche-Orient protobyzantin (4ème–7ème s.). Étude régionale', in G. R. D. King and A. Cameron (eds), *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East II: Land Use and Settlement Patterns* (Princeton), pp. 17–48.

Gehin, P., 2009. 'Fragments patristiques des nouvelles découvertes du Sinaï', *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 6 (2009), pp. 67–93.

Gerard, M., Metzger, C., Person, A., and Sodini, J.-P., 1997. 'Argiles et eulogies en forme de jetons: Qalʿat Semʿan en est-il une source possible?', in H. Maguire (ed.), *Materials Analysis of Byzantine Pottery* (Washington, DC), pp. 9–24.

Gerstel, S. E. J., 1998. 'Painted Sources for Female Piety in Medieval Byzantium', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 52, pp. 89–111.

Giannarelli, E., 1993. 'Women and Miracles in Christian Biography (IVth–Vth Centuries)', *Studia Patristica* 25, pp. 376–80.

Ginter, K., 2001. '*Historia Ecclesiastica* of Evagrius Scholasticus as an Example of Interaction between the Monophysite and Chalcedonian Traditions in the Sixth Century', *Annuarium Historiae Conciliorum* 33.1, pp. 1–8.

Glynias, J., 2020. 'Byzantine Monasticism on the Black Mountain West of Antioch in the 10th–11th Centuries', *Studies in Late Antiquity* 4.4, pp. 408–51.

Goehring, J. E., 1982. 'Pachomius's Vision of Heresy: The Development of a Pachomian Tradition', first published in Muséon 95 (1982), pp. 241–62, reproduced in Goehring 1999, pp. 137–61.

Goehring, J. E., 1999. *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert: Studies in Early Egyptian Monasticism* (Harrisburg, PA).

Goehring, J. E., 2003. 'The Dark Side of Landscape: Ideology and Power in the Christian Myth of the Desert', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 33.3, pp. 437–51.

Goodall, B., 1979. *The Homilies of St. John Chrysostom on the Letters of St. Paul to Titus and Philemon: Prologomena to an Edition* (Berkeley).

Gould, G., 1990. 'Early Egyptian Monasticism and the Church', in J. Loades (ed.), *Monastic Studies: The Continuity of Tradition* (Bangor), pp. 1–10.

Gould, G., 1991. 'The *Life of Antony* and the Origins of Christian Monasticism in Fourth-Century Egypt', *Medieval History* 1.2, pp. 3–11.

Gould, G., 1993. 'Recent Work on Monastic Origins: A Consideration of the Questions Raised by Samuel Rubenson's *The Letters of St. Antony*', *Studia Patristica* 25, pp. 405–16.

Gould, G., 1997. 'Pachomian Sources Revisited', *Studia Patristica* 30, pp. 202–17.

Graf, F., 2014. 'Dangerous Dreaming: The Christian Transformation of Dream Incubation', *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 15, pp. 117–44.

Graf, F., 2015. *Roman Festivals in the Greek East: From the Early Empire to the Middle Byzantine Era* (Cambridge).

Graffin, F., 1978. 'La vie à Antioche d'après les homélies de Sévère. Invectives contre les courses de chevaux, le théâtre et les jeux olympiques', in G. Wießner (ed.), *Erkenntnisse und Meinungen* II (Wiesbaden), pp. 115–30.

Gray, P. T. R., 2005. 'The Legacy of Chalcedon: Christological Problems and their Significance', in Maas 2005, pp. 215–38.

Greatrex, G. 2020. 'Procopius and the Plague in 2020', *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Bizantinística* 35, pp. 5–12.

Greenwood, T., 2012. 'Armenia', in Johnson 2012, pp. 115–34.

Greer, R. A., 1989. *The Fear of Freedom: A Study of Miracles in the Roman Imperial Church* (London).

Gregg, R. C. and Groh, D. E., 1981. *Early Arianism: A View of Salvation* (London).

Griffith, S. H., 2010. 'Mar Jacob of Serugh on Monks and Monasticism: Readings in his Metrical Homilies "On the Singles"', in Kiraz 2010, pp. 71–89.

Hackel, S. (ed.), 1981. *The Byzantine Saint: University of Birmingham, Fourteenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies* (London).

Hägg, T., 2011. 'The *Life of St Antony* between Biography and Hagiography', in Efthymiadis 2011, pp. 17–34.

Hägg, T. and Rousseau, P. (eds), 2000. *Greek Biography and Panegyric in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley).

Hahn, C., 1997. 'Seeing and Believing: The Construction of Sanctity in Early-Medieval Saints' Shrines', *Speculum* 72.4, pp. 1079–1106.

Haldon, J., 1992. 'The Works of Anastasius of Sinai: a Key Source for the History of Seventh-Century East Mediterranean Society and Belief', in A. Cameron and L. I. Conrad (eds), *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East*, Vol. 1: *Problems in the Literary Source Material* (Princeton), pp. 107–47.

Haldon, J., 1997. *Byzantium in the Seventh Century: The Transformation of a Culture*, rev. ed. (Cambridge).

Haldon, J., 2012. 'Commerce and Exchange in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries: Regional Trade and the Movement of Goods', in C. Morrison (ed.), *Trade and Markets in Byzantium* (Washington, DC), pp. 99–122.

Haldon, J., Elton, H., Huebner, S. R., Izdebski A., Mordechai L., and Newfield, T. P., 2018. 'Plagues, Climate Change, and the End of an Empire: A Response to Kyle Harper's *The Fate of Rome* (3): Disease, Agency, and Collapse', *History Compass* 16.12, pp. 1–10.

Haldon, J. and Rosen, A., 2018. 'Society and Environment in the East Mediterranean ca 300–1800 CE. Problems of Resilience, Adaptation and Transformation. Introductory Essay', *Human Ecology* 46, pp. 275–90.

Halkin, F., 1929. 'Les Vies grecques de S. Pachome', *Analecta Bollandiana* 47, pp. 376–88.

Harl, K. W., 1990. 'Sacrifice and Pagan Belief in Fifth- and Sixth-Century Byzantium', *Past and Present* 128, pp. 7–27.

Harmless, W., 2004. *Desert Christians: An Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism* (Oxford).

Harrison, C., Humfress, C., and Sandwell, I. (eds), 2014. *Being Christian in Late Antiquity: A Festschrift for Gillian Clark* (Oxford).
Hartney, A. M., 2004. *John Chrysostom and the Transformation of the City* (London).
Harvey, S. A., 1981. 'The Politicisation of the Byzantine Saint', in Hackel 1981, pp. 37–42.
Harvey, S. A., 1988. 'The Sense of a Stylite: Perspectives on Simeon the Elder', *Vigiliae Christianae* 42.4, pp. 376–94.
Harvey, S. A., 1990a. *Asceticism and Society in Crisis: John of Ephesus and the Lives of the Eastern Saints* (Berkeley).
Harvey, S. A., 1990b. 'Women in Early Byzantine Hagiography: Reversing the Story', in L. L. Coon, K. J. Haldane, E. W. Sommer (eds), *That Gentle Strength: Historical Perspectives on Women in Christianity* (Charlottesville), pp. 36–59.
Harvey, S. A., 1994. 'The Holy and the Poor: Models from Early Syriac Christianity', in E. A. Hanawalt and C. Lindberg (eds), *Through the Eye of a Needle: Judeo-Christian Roots of Social Welfare* (Kirksville, MO), pp. 43–66.
Harvey, S. A., 1998. 'The Stylite's Liturgy: Ritual and Religious Identity in Late Antiquity', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6.3, pp. 523–39.
Harvey, S. A., 2006. *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination* (Berkeley).
Harvey, S. A., 2010. 'To Whom Did Jacob Preach?', in Kiraz 2010, pp. 115–31.
Hatlie, P., 2007. *The Monks and Monasteries of Constantinople ca. 350–850* (Cambridge).
Hatlie, P., 2009. 'Images of Motherhood and Self in Byzantine Literature', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 63, pp. 41–57.
Hayward, P. A., 1999. 'Demystifying the Role of Sanctity in Western Christendom', in Howard-Johnston and Hayward 1999, pp. 115–42.
Helleman, W. E., 2001. 'Cappadocian Macrina as Lady Wisdom', *Studia Patristica* 37, pp. 86–102.
Hefferman, T. J., 1988. *Sacred Biography: Saints and their Biographers in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1988).
Henning, M., 2014. *Educating Early Christians through the Rhetoric of Hell* (Tübingen).
Henry, A., 2015. See under Belgin-Henry.
Herrin, J., 1994. 'Public and Private Forms of Religious Commitment among Byzantine Women', in L. J. Archer, S. Fischler, and M. Wyke (eds), *Women in Ancient Societies: 'An Illusion of the Night'* (Basingstoke), pp. 181–203.
Hevelone-Harper, J. L., 2005. *Disciples of the Desert: Monks, Laity, and Spiritual Authority in Sixth-Century Gaza* (Baltimore).
Hesse, O., 2001. 'Das altkirchliche Mönchtum und die kaiserliche Politik am Beispiel der Apophthegmen und der Viten des Symeon Stylites und des Daniel Stylites', *Studia Patristica* 34, pp. 88–96.
Hester, D., 1990. 'The Eschatology of the Sermons of Symeon the Younger the Stylite', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 34, pp. 329–42.
Hickey, T., 2012. *Wine, Wealth, and the State in Late Antique Egypt: The House of Apion at Oxyrhynchus* (Ann Arbor).
Hinterberger, M., 2014a. 'Byzantine Hagiography and its Literary Genres. Some Critical Observations', in Efthymiadis 2014a, pp. 25–60.
Hinterberger, M., 2014b. 'The Byzantine Hagiographer and his Text', in Efthymiadis 2014a, pp. 211–46.
Hirschfield, Y., 1992. *The Judaean Desert Monasteries in the Byzantine Period* (New Haven).

Hollman, A., 2003. 'A Curse Tablet from the Circus at Antioch', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 145, pp. 67–82.

Holman, S. R., 2001. *The Hungry Are Dying: Beggars and Bishops in Roman Cappadocia* (Oxford).

Holman, S. R., 2006. 'Constructed and Consumed: The Everyday Life of the Poor in 4th C. Cappadocia', in Bowden, Gutteridge, and Machado 2006, pp. 441–64.

Holman, S. R. (ed.), 2008. *Wealth and Poverty in Early Church and Society* (Grand Rapids, MI).

Holman, S. R., 2009. 'Healing the World with Righteousness? The Language of Social Justice in Early Christian Homilies', in Frenkel and Lev 2009, pp. 89–110.

Honigmann, E., 1951. *Évêques et évêchés monophysites d'Asie antérieure au VIe siècle* (Leuven).

Horden, P., 1982. 'Saints and Doctors in the Early Byzantine Empire: The Case of Theodore of Sykeon', in *The Church and Healing, Studies in Church History* 19, pp. 1–13.

Horden, P., 1985. 'The Death of Ascetics: Sickness and Monasticism in the Early Byzantine Middle East', in W. J. Sheils (ed.) *Monks, Hermits and the Ascetic Tradition, Studies in Church History* 22, pp. 41–52.

Horden, P. and Purcell, N., 2000. *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford).

Horn, C. B., 2006. *Asceticism and Christological Controversy in Fifth-Century Palestine: The Career of Peter the Iberian* (Oxford).

Howard-Johnston, J. and Hayward, P. A. (eds), 1999. *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford).

Hunter, D. G., 1989. 'Preaching and Propaganda in Fourth-Century Antioch: John Chrysostom's *Homilies on the Statues*', in D. G. Hunter (ed.), *Preaching in the Patristic Age: Studies in Honor of Walter J. Burghardt, S.J.* (New York), pp. 119–38.

Hunter-Crawley, H., 2020. 'Divinity Refracted: Extended Agency and the Cult of Symeon Stylites the Elder', in V. Gasparini, M. Patzelt, R. Raja, A.-K. Rieger, J. Rüpke, and E. Urciuoli (eds), *Lived Religion in the Ancient Mediterranean World: Approaching Religious Transformations from Archaeology, History and Classics* (Berlin), pp. 261–86.

Izdebski, A., Mordechai, L., and White, S., 2018. 'The Social Burden of Resilience: A Historical Perspective', *Human Ecology* 46.3, pp. 291–303.

Izdebski, A. and Mulryan, M. (eds), 2019. *Environment and Society in the Long Late Antiquity* (Leiden).

Jacobs, A. S., 2003. '"Let Him Guard *Pietas*": Early Christian Exegesis and the Ascetic Family', *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, pp. 265–81.

Jacobs, A. S., 2020. '"I Want to Be Alone": Ascetic Celebrity and the Splendid Isolation of Simeon Stylites', in G. A. Frank, S. R. Holman, and A. S. Jacobs (eds), *The Garb of Being: Embodiment and the Pursuit of Holiness in Late Ancient Christianity* (New York), pp. 145–68.

Jacobs, I. and Elton, H. (eds), 2019. *Asia Minor in the Long Sixth Century: Current Research and Future Directions* (Oxford).

Jaeger, W., 1961. *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* (Cambridge, MA/London).

James, E., 2008. 'The Rise and Function of the Concept "Late Antiquity"', *Journal of Late Antiquity* 1.1, pp. 20–30.

Jeffreys, E., 1979. 'The Attitudes of Byzantine Chronicles towards Ancient History', *Byzantion* 49, pp. 199–238.

Jeffreys, E., 1990a. 'Malalas in Greek', in Jeffreys et al. 1990, pp. 245–68.
Jeffreys, E., 1990b. 'Malalas' Sources', in Jeffreys et al. 1990, pp. 167–216.
Jeffreys, E., 1990c. 'Malalas' World View', in Jeffreys et al. 1990, pp. 55–66.
Jeffreys, E., 1996. 'The Chronicle of John Malalas, Book I: A Commentary', in Allen and Jeffreys 1996, pp. 52–74.
Jeffreys, E., Croke, B., and Scott, R. (eds), 1990. *Studies in John Malalas* (Sydney).
Johnson, S. F. (ed.), 2006a. *Greek Literature in Late Antiquity: Dynamism, Didacticism, Classicism*.
Johnson, S. F., 2006b. *The Life and Miracles of Thekla: A Literary Study* (Cambridge, MA).
Johnson, S. F. (ed.), 2012. *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity* (Oxford).
Jolivet-Lévy, C., Kaplan, M., and Sodini, J. P. (eds), 1993. *Les saints et leur sanctuaire à Byzance: textes, images et monuments* (Paris).
Kaczynski, B. M. (ed.), 2020. *The Oxford Handbook of Christian Monasticism* (Oxford).
Kaldellis, A., 2003. 'The Religion of Ioannes Lydos', *Phoenix* 57.3/4, pp. 300–16.
Kaldellis, A., 2004a. 'Identifying Dissident Circles in Sixth-Century Byzantium: The Friendship of Prokopios and Ioannes Lydos', *Florilegium* 21, pp. 1–17.
Kaldellis, A., 2004b. *Procopius of Caesarea* (Philadelphia).
Kaldellis, A., 2007a. *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformation of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge).
Kaldellis, A., 2007b. 'The Literature of Plague and the Anxieties of Piety in Sixth-Century Byzantium', in F. Mormando and T. Worcester (eds), *Piety and Plague: From Byzantium to the Baroque* (Kirksville, MO), pp. 1–22.
Kaldellis, A., 2014a. 'The Emergence of Literary Fiction in Byzantium and the Paradox of Plausibility', in P. Roilos (ed.), *Medieval Greek Storytelling: Fictionality and Narrative in Byzantium* (Wiesbaden), pp. 115–30.
Kaldellis, A., 2014b. 'The Hagiography of Doubt and Scepticism', in Efthymiadis 2014, pp. 453–77.
Kaldellis, A., 2014c. 'The Making of Hagia Sophia and the Last Pagans of New Rome', *Journal of Late Antiquity* 6.2, pp. 347–66.
Kalleres, D. S., 2015. *City of Demons: Violence, Ritual, and Christian Power in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley).
Kaplan, M., 1993. 'Les sanctuaires de Théodore de Sykéon', in Jolivet-Levy, Kaplan, and Sodini 1993, pp. 65–79.
Kaplan, M., 1995. 'L'hinterland religieux de Constantinople: moines et saints de banlieue d'après l'hagiographie', in C. Mango and G. Dagron (eds), *Constantinople and its Hinterland* (Aldershot), pp. 191–205.
Kaplan, M., 2000. 'Le miracle est-il nécessaire au saint byzantin?', in Aigle 2000, pp. 167–96.
Kaplan, M., 2001. 'L'espace et le sacré dans la Vie de Daniel le Stylite', in M. Kaplan (ed.), *Le sacré et son inscription dans l'espace à Byzantine et en Occident* (Paris), pp. 199–217.
Kaplan, M., 2007. 'Pélerinages et processions à Byzance aux VIe–VIIe siècles: l'exemple de Théodore de Sykéôn', in W. Celan, M. Kokoszko, and M. J. Leszka (eds), *Byzantina europaea: księga jubileuszowa ofiarowana profesorowi Waldemarowi Ceranowi* (Łódź), pp. 219–32.
Kaplan, M. and Kountoura-Galaki, E., 2014. 'Economy and Society in Byzantine Hagiography: *Realia* and Methodological Questions', in Efthymiadis 2014a, pp. 389–418.
Karakhanian, A. S., Trifonov, V. G., Ivanova, T. P., Avagyan, A., Rukieh, M., Minini, H., Dodonov, A. E., and Bachmanov, D. M., 2008. 'Seismic Deformation in the St. Simeon Monasteries (Qalʿat Simʿan), Northwestern Syria', *Tectonophysics* 453, pp. 122–47.

Kardong, T. G., 1990. 'The Monastic Practices of Pachomius and the Pachomians', *Studia Monastica* 31.2, pp. 59–78.

Kelly, J. N. D., 1995. *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom: Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop* (Ithaca).

Kenfield, S., 2014. 'History of the Antioch Excavations', in Redford 2014, pp. 36–77.

Kennedy, H., 1985a. 'The Last Century of Byzantine Syria: A Reinterpretation', *Byzantinische Forschungen* 10, pp. 141–84.

Kennedy, H., 1985b. 'From Polis to Madina: Urban Change in Late Antique and Early Islamic Syria', *Past and Present* 106, pp. 3–27.

Kennedy, H., 1992. 'Antioch: From Byzantium to Islam and Back Again', in J. Rich (ed.), *The City in Late Antiquity* (London), pp. 181–98.

Kennedy, H., 1994. 'Concluding Remarks', in G. R. D. King and A. Cameron (eds), *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East*, Vol. II: *Land Use and Settlement Patterns* (Princeton), pp. 267–70.

Kennedy, H., 2007. 'Justinianic Plague in Syria and the Archaeological Evidence', in Little 2007, pp. 87–95.

Kennedy, H. and Liebeschuetz, J. H. G. W., 1988. 'Antioch and the Villages of Northern Syria in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries A.D.: Trends and Problems', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 32, pp. 65–90.

Keyes, C. F., 1982. 'Introduction: from Social Life to Sacred Biography', in Williams 1982a, pp. 1–22.

Khalek, N., 2011. *Damascus after the Muslim Conquest: Text and Image in Early Islam* (Oxford).

Kiraz, G. A. (ed.), 2010. *Jacob of Serugh and his Times: Studies in Sixth-Century Syriac Christianity* (Piscataway, NJ).

Kirschner, R., 1984. 'The Vocation of Holiness in Late Antiquity', *Vigiliae Christianae* 38.2, pp. 105–24.

Kofsky, A., 1997. 'Peter the Iberian: Pilgrimage, Monasticism and Ecclesiastical Politics in Byzantine Palestine', *Liber Annus* 47, pp. 209–22.

Kofsky, A., 2003. 'The Byzantine Holy Person: the Case of Barsanuphius and John of Gaza', in J. Schwartz and M. Poorthuis (eds), *Saints and Role Models in Judaism and Christianity* (Leiden), pp. 261–85.

Kofsky, A., 2004. 'What Happened to the Monophysite Monasticism of Gaza?', in Bitton-Ashkelony and Kofsky 2004, pp. 183–94.

Kondoleon, C., 2000. *Antioch: The Lost Ancient City* (Princeton).

Krausmüller, D., 2015. 'Contextualising Constantine V's Radical Religious Policies: The Debate about the Intercession of the Saints and the "Sleep of the Soul" in the Chalcedonian and Nestorian Churches', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 39.1, pp. 25–49.

Krawiec, R., 2002. *Shenoute & the Women of the White Monastery: Egyptian Monasticism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford).

Krawiec, R., 2003. '"From the Womb of the Church": Monastic Families', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11.3, pp. 283–307.

Krueger, D., 1996. *Symeon the Holy Fool: Leontius's Life and the Late Antique City* (Berkeley).

Krueger, D., 2000. 'Writing and the Liturgy of Memory in Gregory of Nyssa's Life of Macrina', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 8.4, pp. 483–510.

Lafontaine-Dosogne, J., 1967. *Itinéraires archéologiques dans la région d'Antioche: recherches sur la monastère et sur l'iconographie de S. Syméon Stylite le Jeune* (Brussels).

Lafontaine-Dosogne, J., 1981. 'Une eulogie inédite de St. Syméon le Jeune', *Byzantion* 51, pp. 631–4.
Lampe, G. W. H., 1961. *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford).
Lane Fox, R., 1997. 'The *Life of Daniel*', in Edwards and Swain 1997, pp. 175–225.
Laniado, A., 2009. 'The Early Byzantine State and the Christian Ideal of Voluntary Poverty', in Frenkel and Lev 2009, pp. 15–43.
Lavan, L. (ed.), 2001. *Recent Research in Late-Antique Urbanism* (Portsmouth, RI).
Lee, D., 2007. 'Episcopal Power and Perils in the Late Sixth Century: The Case of Gregory of Antioch', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 50, pp. 99–106.
Lemerle, P., 1971. *Le premier humanisme byzantine: notes et remarques sur enseignement et culture à Byzance des origins au Xe siècle* (Paris).
Lemerle, P., 1979–81. *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de Saint Démétrius et la pénétration des Slaves dans les Balkans*, 2 vols (Paris).
Lesieur, B., 2011. 'La monastère de Séridos sous Barsanuphe et Jean de Gaza: un monastère conforme à la législation impériale et ecclésiastique?', *Revue des études byzantines* 69, pp. 5–47.
Lewit, T., 2020. 'A Viewpoint on Eastern Mediterranean Villages in Late Antiquity: Applying the Lens of Community Resilience Theory', *Studies in Late Antiquity* 4.1, pp. 44–75.
Leyerle, B., 1994. 'John Chrysostom on Almsgiving and the Use of Money', *The Harvard Theological Review* 87.1, pp. 29–47.
Leyerle, B., 2001. *Theatrical Shows and Ascetic Lives: John Chrysostom's Attack on Spiritual Marriage* (Berkeley).
Leyser, C., 2006. 'The Uses of the Desert in the Sixth-Century West', *Church History and Religious Culture* 86.1, pp. 113–34.
Liebeschuetz, J. H. W. G., 1972. *Antioch: City and Administration in the Later Roman Empire* (Oxford).
Liebeschuetz, J. H. W. G., 1993. 'Ecclesiastical Historians on Their Own Times', *Studia Patristica* 24, pp. 151–63.
Liebeschuetz, J. H. W. G., 1995. 'Pagan Mythology in the Christian Empire', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 2.2, pp. 193–208.
Liebeschuetz, J. H. W. G., 2001a. *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford).
Liebeschuetz, J. H. W. G., 2001b. 'The Uses and Abuses of the Concept of "Decline" in Later Roman History: or, Was Gibbon Politically Incorrect?', in Lavan 2001, pp. 233–45.
Liebeschuetz, J. H. W. G., 2004. 'Malalas on Antioch', article V in idem, *Decline and Change in Late Antiquity: Religion, Barbarians and their Historiography* (Aldershot, 2006), first published in Cabouret, Gatier, and Saliou 2004, pp. 143–53.
Lifschitz, F., 1994. 'Beyond Positivism and Genre: "Hagiographical" Texts as Historical Narrative', *Viator* 25, pp. 95–114.
Limberis, V. M., 2011. *Architects of Piety: The Cappadocian Fathers and the Cult of the Martyrs* (Oxford).
Lipatov-Chicherin, N., 2013. 'Preaching as the Audience Heard It: Unedited Transcripts of Patristic Homilies', *Studia Patristica* 64, pp. 277–97.
Little, L. K., 2007a. 'Life and Afterlife of the First Plague Pandemic', in Little 2007b, pp. 3–32.
Little, L. K., 2007b. (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity: The Pandemic of 541–750* (New York).
Lontie, L., 1997. 'Un traité syriaque jacobite contre les partisans de Paul de Bēth Ukkāmē (564–581) (ms. British Library Add. 14. 533, f. 172r°b–176v°b)', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 63, pp. 5–51.

López, A. G., 2013. *Shenoute of Atripe and the Uses of Poverty: Rural Patronage, Religious Conflict, and Monasticism in Late Antique Egypt* (Berkeley).
Loosley Leeming, E., 2018. *Architecture and Asceticism: Cultural Interaction between Syria and Georgia in Late Antiquity* (Leiden).
Loosley Leeming, E., 2019. 'Creating an "Orthodox" Past: Georgian Hagiography and the Construction of a Denominational Identity', *Medieval Worlds* 10, pp. 61–71.
Louth, A., 1988. 'St Athanasius and the Greek *Life of Antony*', *Journal of Theological Studies* 39.2, pp. 504–9.
Louth, A., 2002. *St John Damascene: Tradition and Originality in Byzantine Theology* (Oxford).
Lubomierski, N., 2006. 'The Vita *Sinuthii* (the Life of Shenoute): Panegyric or Biography?', *Studia Patristica* 39, pp. 417–21.
Lubomierski, N., 2008. 'The Coptic Life of Shenoute', in Gabra and Takla 2008, pp. 91–8.
Luck, G., 1984. 'Notes on the *Vita Macrinae* by Gregory of Nyssa', in Spira 1984, pp. 21–32.
Ludlow, M., 2007. *Gregory of Nyssa, Ancient and (Post)modern* (Oxford).
Maas, M., 1992. *John Lydus and the Roman Past: Antiquarianism and Politics in the Age of Justinian* (London).
Maas, M. (ed.), 2005. *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian* (Cambridge).
Macmullen, R., 1982. 'The Epigraphic Habit in the Roman Empire', *The American Journal of Philology* 103.3, pp. 233–46.
Magdalino, P., 1993. 'The History of the Future and its Uses: Prophecy, Policy and Propaganda', in R. Beaton and C. Roueché (eds), *The Making of Byzantine History: Studies Dedicated to Donald M. Nicol* (Aldershot), pp. 3–34.
Magdalino, P., 1999. '"What We Heard in the Lives of the Saints We Have Seen with Our Own Eyes": the Holy Man as Literary Text in Tenth-Century Constantinople', in Howard Johnston and Hayward (1999), pp. 83–112.
Magness, J., 2003. *The Archaeology of the Early Islamic Settlement in Palestine* (Winona Lake, IN).
Mango, C., 1966. 'Isaurian Builders', in P. Wirth (ed.), *Polychronion: Festschrift Franz Döger zum 75 Geburtstag* (Heidelberg), pp. 358–65.
Mango, C., 1984. 'A Byzantine Hagiographer at Work: Leontios of Neapolis', in I. Hutter (ed.), *Byzanz und der Westen* (Vienna), pp. 25–41.
Mango, C., 1992. 'Aspects of Syrian Piety', in Boyd and Mango 1992, pp. 99–105.
Mango, C., 1997. 'Saints', in G. Cavallo (ed.), *The Byzantines* (London), pp. 255–80.
Mango, M. M., 1986. *Silver from Early Byzantium: The Kaper Koraon and Related Treasures* (Baltimore).
Mango, M. M., 2002a. 'Excavations and Survey at Androna, Syria: The Oxford Team 1999', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 56, pp. 307–15.
Mango, M. M., 2002b. 'Fishing in the Desert', *Paleoslavica* 10, pp. 323–30.
Mango, M. M., 2003. 'Excavations and Survey at Androna, Syria: The Oxford Team 2000', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 57 (2003), pp. 293–7.
Mango, M. M., 2005. 'A New Stylite at Androna in Syria', in *Mélanges Jean-Pierre Sodini* (Paris), pp. 329–42.
Mango, M. M., 2008. 'Baths, Reservoirs and Water Use at Androna in Late Antiquity and the Early Islamic Period', in Bartl and Moaz 2008, pp. 73–88.
Mango, M. M., Decker, M., Mango, C., Pollard, N., Salter, C., and Wilson, A., n.d. 'Oxford Excavations at Andarin (Androna): September 1998', accessed 9 November

2013: 'http://www.arch.ox.ac.uk/files/Research%20Projects/Androna/Publications/excavations%20september%201998%20AAAS.pdf'.

Maraval, P., 1981. 'Fonction pédagogique de la littérature hagiographique d'un lieu de pèlerinage: l'exemple des Miracles de Cyr et Jean', in *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés IVe–XIIe siècles* (Paris), pp. 383–97.

Maraval, P., 1997. 'La Vie de saint Macrine de Grégoire de Nysse: continuité et nouveauté d'un genre littéraire', in G. Freyburger and L. Pernot (eds), *Du héros païen au saint chrétien* (Paris), pp. 133–8.

Marcone, A., 2008. 'A Long Late Antiquity? Considerations on a Controversial Periodization', *Journal of Late Antiquity* 1.1, pp. 4–19.

Martin-Hisard, B., 1985–6. 'Les "treize saints pères": formation et évolution d'une tradition hagiographique géorgienne (VIe–XIIe siècles)', *Revue des Études Géorgiennes et Caucasiennes* 1, pp. 141–68, and 2, pp. 75–111.

Martin-Hisard, B., 2006–7. 'La *Vie de Georges l'Hagiorite* (1009/1010–29 Juin 1065)', *Revue des Études Byzantines* 64–5, pp. 5–204.

Markus, R. A., 1994. 'How on Earth Could Places Become Holy?', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 2.3, pp. 257–71.

Matitashvili, S., 2018. 'The Monasteries Founded by the Thirteen Syrian Fathers in Iberia', *Studies in Late Antiquity* 2.1, pp. 4–39.

Maxwell, J. L., 2006. *Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity: John Chrysostom and his Congregation in Antioch* (Cambridge).

Mayer, W., 1997. 'John Chrysostom and his Audiences: Distinguishing Different Congregations at Antioch and Constantinople', *Studia Patristica* 31, pp. 70–5.

Mayer, W., 1998. 'John Chrysostom: Extraordinary Preacher, Ordinary Audience', in Cunningham and Allen 1998, pp. 105–37.

Mayer, W., 2005. *The Homilies of St John Chrysostom, Provenance: Reshaping the Foundations* (Rome).

Mayer, W., 2006. 'Poverty and Society in the World of John Chrysostom', in Bowden, Gutteridge, and Machado 2006, pp. 465–84.

Mayer, W., 2008a. 'Poverty and Generosity Toward the Poor in the Time of John Chrysostom', in Holman 2008, pp. 140–58.

Mayer, W., 2008b. 'Homiletics', in S. A. Harvey and D. G. Hunter (eds), *Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (Oxford), pp. 565–83.

Mayer, W., 2009. 'Antioch and the Intersection between Religious Factionalism, Place, and Power in Late Antiquity', in A. Cain and N. Lenski (eds), *The Power of Religion in Late Antiquity* (Farnham), pp. 357–67.

Mayer, W., and Allen, P., 2000. *John Chrysostom* (London).

Mayer, W., and Allen, P., 2012. *The Churches of Syrian Antioch* (Leuven).

Mazza, R., 2001. *L'Archivio degli Apioni: terra, lavoro e proprietà senatoria nell'Egitto tardoantico* (Bari).

Mazza, R., 2008. Review of Sarris 2006 in the *Journal of Agrarian Change* 8.1, pp. 150–6.

McCormick, M., 2015. 'Tracking Mass Death during the Fall of Rome's Empire (I)', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 28, pp. 325–57.

Mécérian, J., 1962. 'Les inscriptions du Mont Admirable', *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 38, pp. 295–330.

Meier, M., 2003. *Das andere Zeitalter Justinians: Kontingenzerfahrung und Kontingenzbewältigung im 6. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Göttingen).

Meier, M., 2016. 'The "Justinianic Plague": The Economic Consequences of the Pandemic in the Eastern Roman Empire and its Cultural and Religious Effects', *Early Medieval Europe* 24.3, pp. 267–92.

Mendham, J., 1849. *The Seventh General Council, the second of Nicaea: in which the worship of images was established: with copious notes from the 'Caroline Books' compiled by order of Charlemagne for its confutation* (London).

Menze, V., 2007. 'Priests, Laity and the Sacrament of the Eucharist in Sixth Century Syria', *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 7, pp. 129–46.

Menze, V., 2008. *Justinian and the Making of the Syrian Orthodox Church* (Oxford).

Menze, V., 2015. 'The Transformation of a Saintly Paradigm: Simeon the Elder and the Legacy of Stylitism', in M. Blömer, A. Lichtenberger, and R. Raja (eds), *Religious Identities in the Levant from Alexander to Muhammad: Continuity and Change* (Turnhout), pp. 213–26.

Meredith, A., 1984. 'A Comparison between the Vita Sanctae Macrinae of Gregory of Nyssa, the Vita Plotini of Porphyry and the De Vita Pythagorica of Iamblichus', in Spira 1984, pp. 181–95.

Metcalf, W. E., 2000. 'The Mint of Antioch', in Kondoleon 2000, pp. 105–11.

Millar, F., 2006. *A Greek Roman Empire: Power and Belief under Theodosius II (408–450)* (Berkeley).

Millar, F., 2014. 'The Image of a Christian Monk in Northern Syria: Symeon Stylites the Younger', in Harrison, Humfress, and Sandwell 2014, pp. 278–96.

Miller, D., 1970. 'The Emperor and the Stylite: A Note on the Imperial Office', *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 15, pp. 207–12.

Mitchell, S., 1993. *Anatolia: Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor*, 2 vols (Oxford).

Mitchell, S., 1999. 'The Life and *Lives* of Gregory Thaumaturgus', in Drijvers and Watts 1999, pp. 99–138.

Moawad, S., 2008. 'The Relationship of St. Shenoute of Atripe with his Contemporary Patriarchs of Alexandria', in Gabra and Takla 2008, pp. 107–19.

Momigliano, A., 1985. 'The Life of St Macrina by Gregory of Nyssa', in J. W. Eader and J. Ober (eds), *The Craft of the Ancient Historian: Essays in Honor of Chester G. Starr* (Lanham, MD), pp. 443–58.

The Monks of Solesmes, 1970. *Abbé Isaïe: Recueil ascétique* (Abbaye de Bellefontaine).

Mordechai, L., 2018. 'Short-Term Cataclysmic Events in Premodern Complex Societies', *Human Ecology* 46.3, pp. 323–33.

Mordechai, L., 2019. 'Antioch in the Sixth Century: Resilience or Vulnerability?', in Izdebski and Mulryan 2019, pp. 207–23.

Mordechai, L., 2020. 'The Economic Effects of the Justinianic Plague?', *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Bizantinística* 35, 19–27.

Mordechai, L. and Eisenberg, M., 2019a. 'Rejecting Catastrophe: The Case of the Justinianic Plague', *Past and Present* 244.1, pp. 3–48.

Mordechai, L. and Eisenberg, M., 2019b. 'The Justinianic Plague: An Interdisciplinary Review', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 43.2, pp. 156–80.

Mordechai, L. and Pickett, J., 2018. 'Earthquakes as the Quintessential SCE: Methodology and Societal Resilience', *Human Ecology* 46.3, pp. 335–48.

Morony, M. G., 2007. '"For Whom Does the Writer Write?": The First Bubonic Plague According to Syriac Sources', in Little 2007, pp. 59–86.

Morris, R., 1995. *Monks and Laymen in Byzantium, 843–1118* (Cambridge).

Muehlberger, E., 2019. *Moment of Reckoning: Imagined Death and its Consequences in Late Ancient Christianity* (New York).

Naccache, A., 1991. *Le décor des églises de villages d'Antiochène du IVe au VIIe siècle*, 2 vols (Paris).
Nasrallah, J., 1970. 'Le couvent de Saint-Siméon l'Alépin: témoignages littéraires et jalons sur son histoire', *Parole de l'Orient* 1.2, pp. 327–56.
Nasrallah, J., 1971. 'L'orthodoxie de Siméon Stylite l'Alépin et sa survie dans l'église melchite', *Parole de l'Orient* 2.2, pp. 345–64.
Nasrallah, J., 1972a. 'Couvents de la Syrie du Nord portant le nom de Siméon', *Syria* 49, pp. 127–59.
Nasrallah, J., 1972b. 'Une Vie arabe de Saint Syméon le Jeune (521–592)', *Analecta Bollandiana* 90, pp. 387–9.
Neary, D., 2017. 'The Image of Justinianic Orthopraxy in Eastern Monastic Literature', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 25.1, pp. 119–47.
Odorico, P. and Panagiotis, A. A. (eds), 2004. *Les* Vies des saints *à Byzance, genre littéraire ou biographie historique?* (Paris).
Olivar, A., 1991. *La predicación cristiana antigua* (Barcelona).
Olivar, A., 1998. 'Reflections on Problems Raised by Early Christian Preaching', trans. J. Munitiz in Cunningham and Allen 1998, pp. 21–32.
Pamir, H., 2014. 'Archaeological Research in Antioch on the Orontes and its Vicinity: 2002–12', in Redford 2014, pp. 78–123.
Pamir, H., 2014b. in S. Ladstätter, F. Pirson, and T. Schmidts (eds), *Harbors and Harbor Cities in the Eastern Mediterranean from Antiquity to the Byzantine Period: Recent Discoveries and Current Approaches* (Istanbul), pp. 177–98.
Pamir, H., 2016. 'Excavations at and around the Hippodrome of Antioch', *Anmed* 2014–16, pp. 301–7.
Pamir, H. and Sezgin, N., 2016. 'The Sundial and Convivium Scene from the Rescue Excavation in a Late Antique House of Antioch', *Adalya* 19, pp. 251–80.
Papaconstantinou, A., 2012. 'Egypt', in Johnson 2012, pp. 195–214.
Parker, L., 2016. 'Paradigmatic Piety: Liturgy in the *Life of Martha*, Mother of Symeon Stylites the Younger', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 24.1, pp. 99–125.
Parrinello, R. M., 2013. 'Un cas de prédication anti-chalcédonienne: l'homélie LXI de Sévère d'Antioche (VIe siècle)', in F. Morenzoni (ed.) *Preaching and Political Society: From Late Antiquity to the End of the Middle Ages* (Turnhout), pp. 47–64.
Patlagean, E., 1977. *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance, 4e–7e siècles* (Paris).
Patrich, J., 1995. *Sabas, Leader of Palestinian Monasticism: A Comparative Study in Eastern Monasticism, Fourth to Seventh Centuries* (Washington, DC).
Patrich, J. (ed.), 2001. *The Sabaite Heritage in the Orthodox Church from the Fifth Century to the Present* (Leuven).
Paxton, F. S., 1990. *Christianising Death: The Creation of a Ritual Process in Early Medieval Europe* (London).
Peeters, P., 1927. 'S. Thomas d'Émèse et la Vie de Ste Marthe', *Analecta Bollandiana* 45, pp. 262–96.
Peeters, P., 1928. 'L'église géorgienne du Clibanion au Mont Admirable', *Analecta Bollandiana* 46, pp. 241–86.
Peeters, P., 1944. 'Sainte Golindouch, martyr perse', *Analecta Bollandiana* 62 (1944), pp. 76–124.
Peeters, P., 1950. *Orient et Byzance: le tréfonds oriental de l'hagiographie byzantine* (Brussels).

Peña, I., Castellana, P., and Fernandez, R., 1975. *Les stylites syriens* (Milan).
Perrone, L., 1998. 'Monasticism as a Factor of Religious Interaction in the Holy Land during the Byzantine Period', in A. Kofsky and G. G. Stroumsa (eds), *Sharing the Sacred: Religious Contacts and Conflicts in the Holy Land* (Jerusalem), pp. 67–95.
Peterson, R. M., 1982. '"The Gift of Discerning Spirits', in the *Vita Antonii* 16–44', *Studia Patristica* 17.2, pp. 523–7.
Pétridès, S., 1902. 'Saint Syméon, le nouveau stylite, mélode', *Échos d'Orient* 5.5, pp. 270–4.
Philothée du Sinaï, 2008. *Nouveaux manuscrits syriaques du Sinaï* (Athens).
Pummer, R., 2002. *Early Christian Authors on Samaritans and Samaritanism: Texts, Translations and Commentary* (Tübingen).
Ramelli, I., 2016. *Social Justice and the Legitimacy of Slavery: The Role of Philosphical Asceticism from Ancient Judaism to Late Antiquity* (Oxford).
Rapp, C., 1996. 'Figures of Female Sanctity: Byzantine Edifying Manuscripts and their Audience', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 50, pp. 313–44.
Rapp, C., 1999. '"For Next to God, You Are My Salvation": Reflections on the Rise of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', in Howard-Johnston and Hayward 1999, pp. 63–81.
Rapp, C., 2005. *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (Berkeley).
Rapp, C., 2009. 'Charity and Piety as Episcopal and Imperial Virtues in Late Antiquity', in Frenkel and Lev 2009, pp. 75–87.
Rapp, C., 2011. 'Early Monasticism in Egypt: Between Hermits and Cenobites', in G. Melville and A. Müller (eds), *Female 'Vita Religiosa' between Late Antiquity and the High Middle Ages: Structures, Developments and Spatial Contexts* (Vienna), pp. 21–42.
Redford, S., ed., 2014. *Antioch on the Orontes: Early Explorations in the City of Mosaics* (Istanbul).
Reinink, G. J., 2002. 'Heraclius, the New Alexander: Apocalyptic Prophecies during the Reign of Heraclius', in G. J. Reinink and B. H. Stolte (eds), *The Reign of Heraclius (610–641): Crisis and Confrontation* (Leuven), pp. 81–94.
Remijsen, S., 2015. *The End of Greek Athletics in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge).
Reynolds, S., 1991. 'Social Mentalities and the Case of Medieval Scepticism', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 1, pp. 21–41.
Riba, B., 2018. *Le village de Kafr 'Aqāb: étude monographique d'un site de Ǧebel Waṣṭāni (massif calcaire de la Syrie du nord), topographie et architecture* (Turnhout).
Rivière, J., 1924. 'Rôle du démon au jugement particulier chez les pères', *Revue des Sciences Religieuses* 4, pp. 43–64.
Rizos, E., 2019. 'Sixth-Century Asia Minor through the Lens of Hagiography: Ecclesiastical Power and Institutions in City and Countryside', in Jacobs and Elton 2019, pp. 45–61.
Rochow, I., 1976. 'Die Heidenprozesse unter den Kaisern Tiberios II. Konstantinos und Maurikios', in H. Köpstein and F. Winkelmann (eds), *Studien zum 7. Jahrhundert in Byzanz: Probleme d. Herausbildung d. Feudalismus* (Berlin), pp. 120–30.
Rotman, T., 2019. 'Imitation and Rejection of Eastern Practices in Merovingian Gaul: Gregory of Tours and Vulfilaic the Stylite of Trier', in S. Esders, Y. Hen, P. Lucas, and T. Rotman (eds), *The Merovingian Kingdoms and the Mediterranean World* (London).
Rousseau, P., 1978. *Ascetics, Authority, and the Church in the Age of Jerome and Cassian* (Oxford).
Rousseau, P., 1991. 'Christian Asceticism and the Early Monks', in I. Hazlett (ed.), *Early Christianity: Origins and Evolution to AD 600: In Honour of W. H. C. Frend* (London), pp. 112–22.

Rousseau, P., 1997. 'Orthodoxy and the Cenobite', *Studia Patristica* 30, pp. 241–58.
Rousseau, P., 1998. 'The Preacher's Audience: A More Optimistic View', in T. W. Hillard, R. A. Kearsley, C. E. V. Nixon, and A. M. Nobbs (eds), *Ancient History in a Modern University*, Vol. 2: *Early Christianity, Late Antiquity and Beyond* (Grand Rapids, MI), pp. 391–400.
Rousseau, P., 1999a. *Pachomius: The Making of a Community in Fourth-Century Egypt*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley).
Rousseau, P., 1999b. 'Ascetics as Mediators and as Teachers', in Howard-Johnston and Hayward 1999, pp. 45–59.
Rousseau, P., 2000. 'Antony as Teacher in the Greek *Life*', in Hägg and Rousseau 2000, pp. 89–109.
Rousseau, P., 2005. 'The Pious Household and the Virgin Chorus: Reflections on Gregory of Nyssa's Life of Macrina', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 13.2, pp. 165–86.
Rubenson, S., 1990. *The Letters of St. Antony: Origenist Theology, Monastic Tradition and the Making of a Saint* (Lund).
Rubenson, S., 2000. 'Philosophy and Simplicity: The Problem of Classical Education in Early Christian Biography', in Hägg and Rousseau 2000, pp. 110–39.
Rylaarsdam, D., 2014. *John Chrysostom on Divine Pedagogy: The Coherence of his Theology and Preaching* (Oxford).
Salamon, M., 1993. 'Theology and Coinage: The Name of Theoupolis on the Coins of Antioch', *Acts du XIe congrès international de numismatique* 3 (Louvain-la-Neuve), pp. 15–20.
Sandwell, I., 2007. *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity: Greeks, Jews, and Christians in Antioch* (Cambridge).
Sandwell, I. and Huskinson, J. (eds), 2004. *Culture and Society in Later Roman Antioch* (Oxford).
Saradi, H., 1995. 'Constantinople and its Saints (IVth–VIth c.): The Image of the City and Social Considerations', *Studi Medievali*, 3rd series, 36.1, pp. 87–110.
Saradi, H., 2006. *The Byzantine City in the Sixth Century: Literary Images and Historical Reality* (Athens).
Saradi, H., 2014. 'The City in Byzantine Hagiography', in Efthymiadis 2014a, pp. 419–52.
Sarris, P., 2002. 'The Justinianic Plague: Origins and Effects', *Continuity and Change*, 17.2, pp. 169–82.
Sarris, P., 2006. *Economy and Society in the Age of Justinian* (Cambridge).
Sarris, P., 2007. 'Bubonic Plague in Byzantium: The Evidence of Non-Literary Sources', in Little 2007, pp. 119–32.
Sarris, P., 2011a. 'The Early Byzantine Economy in Context: Aristocratic Property and Economic Growth Reconsidered', *Early Medieval Europe* 19.3, pp. 255–84.
Sarris, P., 2011b. *Empires of Faith: The Fall of Rome to the Rise of Islam, 500–700* (Oxford).
Sarris, P., 2011c. 'Restless Peasants and Scornful Lords: Lay Hostility to Holy Men and the Church in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages', in Sarris, Dal Santo, and Booth 2011, pp. 1–10.
Sarris, P., Dal Santo, M., and Booth, P. (eds), 2011. *An Age of Saints? Power, Conflict and Dissent in Early Medieval Christianity* (Leiden).
Schneelmelcher, W., 1980. 'Das Kreuz Christi und die Dämonen: Bemerkungen zur Vita Antonii des Athanasius', in E. Dassmann and F. K. Suso (eds), *Pietas: Festschrift für Bernhard Kötting* (Münster), pp. 281–92.
Schachner, L. A., 2010. 'The Archaeology of the Stylite', *Late Antique Archaeology* 6, pp. 329–97.

Schor, A. M., 2011. *Theodoret's People: Social Networks and Religious Conflict in Late Roman Syria* (Berkeley).

Schoolman, E., 2017. 'Luxury, Vice and Health: Changing Perspectives on Baths and Bathing in Late Antique Antioch', *Studies in Late Antiquity* 3.1, pp. 225–53.

Schroeder, C. T., 2007. *Monastic Bodies: Discipline and Salvation in Shenoute of Atripe* (Philadelphia).

Schroeder, C. T., 2020. *Children and Family in Late Antique Egyptian Monasticism* (Cambridge).

Scott, R., 1990. 'Malalas and his Contemporaries', in Jeffreys et al. 1990, pp. 66–85.

Scott, R., 2011. 'Interpreting the Late Fifth and Early Sixth Centuries from Byzantine Chronicle Trivia', in G. Nathan and L. Garland (eds), *Basileia: Essays on Imperium and Culture in Honour of E. M. and M. J. Jeffreys* (Virginia, Queensland), pp. 83–93.

Ševčenko, I. and Ševčenko, N., 1984. *The Life of St. Nicholas of Sion* (Brookline, MA).

Shepardson, C., 2014. *Controlling Contested Places: Late Antique Antioch and the Spatial Politics of Religious Controversy* (Berkeley).

Sheridan, M., 2007. 'Rhetorical Structure in Coptic Sermons', in J. E. Goehring and J. A. Timbie (eds), *The World of Early Egyptian Christianity: Language, Literature and Social Context* (Washington, DC), pp. 199–223.

Sheridan, M., 2011. 'The Encomium in the Coptic Literature of the Late Sixth Century', in P. Buzi and A. Camplani (eds), *Christianity in Egypt: Literary Production and Intellectual Trends* (Rome), pp. 443–64.

Shoemaker, S. J., 2003. *Ancient Traditions of the Virgin Mary's Dormition and Assumption* (Oxford).

Shore, A. F., 1979. 'Extracts of Besa's "Life of Shenoute" in Sahidic', *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 65, pp. 134–43.

Silvas, A. M., 2008. *Macrina the Younger, Philosopher of God* (Turnhout).

Sinkewicz, R. E., 2003. *Evagrius of Pontus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus* (Oxford).

Sintubin, M., 2011. 'Archaeoseismology: Past, Present, and Future', *Quaternary International* 242.1, pp. 4–10.

Sitzler, S., 2009. 'The Indigent and the Wealthy in the Homilies of John Chrysostom', *Vigiliae Christianae* 63.5, pp. 468–89.

Slusser, M., 1998. *St. Gregory Thaumaturgus: Life and Works* (Washington, DC).

Smith, J. M. H., 1992. 'Review Article: Early Medieval Hagiography in the Late Twentieth Century', *Early Medieval Europe* 1, pp. 69–76.

Smith, S. D., 2019. *Greek Epigram and Byzantine Culture: Gender, Desire, and Denial in the Age of Justinian* (Cambridge).

Sodini, J. P., 2003. 'Archaeology and Late Antique Social Structures', in L. Lavan and W. Bowden (eds), *Theory and Practice in Late Antique Archaeology* (Leiden), pp. 25–56.

Sodini, J. P., 2010. 'Saint-Syméon: l'influence de Saint-Syméon dans le culte et l'économie de l'Antiochene', in A. Vauchez and J. de La Genière (eds), *Les sanctuaires et leur rayonnement dans le monde méditerranéen, de l'Antiquité à l'époque moderne* (Paris), pp. 295–322.

Sodini, J. P., Tate, G., et. al., 1980. 'Déhès (Syrie du nord) Campagnes I–III (1976–1978). Recherches sur l'habitat rural', *Syria* 57.1, pp. 1–304.

Soler, E., 2006. *Le sacré et le salut à Antioche au IVe siècle ap. J.-C: pratiques festives et comportements religieux dans le processus de christianisation de la cité* (Beirut).

Speck, P., 1991. 'Wunderheilige und Bilder: zur Frage des Beginns der Bilderverehrung', in W. Brandes, S. Kotzabassi, C. Ludwig, and P. Speck (eds), *Poikila Byzantina II* (Bonn), pp. 163–247.

Spira, A. (ed.), 1984. *The Biographical Works of Gregory of Nyssa* (Cambridge, MA).

Stahl, A. M., 2017. 'New Archaeology from Old Coins: Antioch Re-Examined', in P. Bogucki and P. J. Crabtree (eds), *European Archaeology as Anthropology: Essays in Memory of Bernard Wailes* (Philadelphia), pp. 225–44.

Stang, C. M., 2010. 'Digging Holes and Building Pillars: Simeon Stylites and the "Geometry" of Ascetic Practice', *Harvard Theological Review* 103.4, pp. 447–70.

Stathakopoulos, D. Ch., 2004. *Famine and Pestilence in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine Empire* (Aldershot).

Stathakopoulos, D. Ch., 2007. 'Crime and Punishment: The Plague in the Byzantine Empire, 541–749', in Little 2007b, pp. 99–118.

Stathakopoulos, D. Ch., 2020. '(Not) Learning from the Plague', *Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Bizantinística* 35, pp. 13–18.

Steppa, J.-A., 2005. *John Rufus and the World Vision of Anti-Chalcedonian Culture*, 2nd ed. (Piscataway, NJ).

Sterk, A., 1998. 'On Basil, Moses, and the Model Bishop: The Cappadocian Legacy of Leadership', *Church History* 67.2, pp. 227–53.

Sterk, A., 2004. *Renouncing the World Yet Leading the Church: The Monk-Bishop in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA).

Stewart, C., 2004. 'Ritual Dreams and Historical Orders: Incubation between Paganism and Christianity', in D. Yatromanolakis and P. Roilos (eds), *Greek Ritual Poetics* (Cambridge, MA), pp. 338–55.

Stewart-Sykes, A., 1998. 'Hermas the Prophet and Hippolytus the Preacher: The Roman Homily and its Social Context', in Cunningham and Allen 1998, pp. 33–63.

Stoyanov, Y., 2011. *Defenders and Enemies of the True Cross: The Sasanian Conquests of Jerusalem in 614 and Byzantine Ideology of Anti-Persian Warfare* (Vienna).

Strube, C., 2008. 'Al-Andarin/Androna: Site and Setting', in Bartl and Moaz 2008, pp. 57–71.

Sweeney, C. R., 2018. 'Holy Images and Holy Matter: Images in the Performance of Miracles in the Age before Iconoclasm', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 26.1, pp. 111–38.

Talbot, A.-M., 1998. 'Female Sanctity in Byzantium', originally published in Italian as 'Essere donna e santa', in S. Gentile (ed.) *Oriente Cristiano e santità. Figure e storie di santi tra Bisanzio e l'Occidente* (Milan, 1998), pp. 61–8; published in English as article VI in Talbot 2001, pp. 1–16 [I cite the English version].

Talbot, A.-M., 2001. *Women and Religious Life in Byzantium* (Aldershot, 2001).

Talbot, A.-M., 2002a. 'Female Pilgrimage in Late Antiquity and the Byzantine Era', *Acta Byzantina Fennica*, pp. 73–88.

Talbot, A.-M., 2002b. 'Pilgrimage to Healing Shrines: The Evidence of Miracle Accounts', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 56, pp. 153–73.

Tannous, J., 2013. 'You Are What You Read: Qenneshre and the Miaphysite Church in the Seventh Century', in P. Wood (ed.), *History and Identity in the Late Antique Near East* (Oxford), pp. 83–102.

Tannous, J., 2014. 'In Search of Monotheletism', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 68, pp. 29–67.

Tannous, J., 2018. *The Making of the Medieval Middle East: Religion, Society and Simple Believers* (Princeton).

Tate, G., 1992. *Les campagnes de la Syrie du Nord du IIe au VIIe siècle* (Paris).

Tate, G., 2004. 'Les relations villes-campagnes dans le nord de la Syrie entre le IVe et le VIe siècle', in Cabouret, Gatier, and Saliou 2004, pp. 311–18.
Tate, G., Abdulkarim, M., Charpentier, G., Duvette, C., and Piaton, C., 2013. *Serǧilla: village d'Apamène* (Beirut).
Tchalenko, G., 1953–8. *Villages antiques de la Syrie du Nord*, 3 vols (Paris).
Telfer, W., 1936. 'The Cultus of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus', *Harvard Theological Review* 29.3, pp. 225–344.
Thomas, J. P., 1987. *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire* (Washington, DC).
Thompson, R., 2000. 'Armenia in the Fifth and Sixth Century', in A. Cameron, B. Ward-Perkins, and M. Whitby (eds), *Cambridge Ancient History XIV* (Cambridge), pp. 662–77.
Toneatto, V., 2004. 'Le récit hagiographique: réinterprétation de l'histoire et construction idéologique. Le cas des vies d'Euthyme et de Sabas par Cyrille de Scythopolis', in Odorico and Panagiotis 2004, pp. 137–59.
Torrance, A., 2012. *Repentance in Late Antiquity: Eastern Asceticism and the Framing of the Christian Life, c. 400–650 CE* (Oxford).
Trampedach, K., 2013. 'Daniel Stylites and Leo I: An Uneasy Relationship between Saint and Emperor', in B. Dignas, R. Parker, and G. G. Stroumsa (eds), *Priests and Prophets among Pagans, Jews and Christians* (Leuven), pp. 185–207.
Treadgold, W., 1994. 'Taking Sources on Their Own Terms and on Ours: Peter Brown's Late Antiquity', *Antiquité Tardive* 2, pp. 153–9.
Trombley, F. R., 1985a. 'Monastic Foundations in Sixth-Century Anatolia and their Role in the Social and Economic Life of the Countryside', *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 30.1, pp. 45–59.
Trombley, F. R., 1985b. 'Paganism in the Greek World at the End of Antiquity: The Case of Rural Anatolia and Greece', *Harvard Theological Review* 78, pp. 327–52.
Trombley, F. R., 1993–4. *Hellenic Religion and Christianisation c. 370–529*, 2 vols (Leiden).
Trombley, F. R., 1994. 'Religious Transition in Sixth-Century Syria', *Byzantinische Forschungen* 20, pp. 153–94.
Trombley, F. R., 1997. 'War and Society in Rural Syria c. 502–613 A.D.: Observations on the Epigraphy', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 21, pp. 154–209.
Trombley, F. R., 2004a. 'Demographic and Cultural Transition in the Territorium of Antioch, 6th–10th c.', in Cabouret, Gatier, and Saliou 2004, pp. 341–62.
Trombley, F. R., 2004b. 'Epigraphic Data on Village Culture and Social Institutions: An Interregional Comparison (Syria, Phoenicia Libanensis and Arabia)', in Bowden et al. 2004, pp. 447–76.
Torrance, A., 2009. 'Standing in the Breach: The Significance and Function of the Saints in the Letters of Barsanuphius and John of Gaza', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 17.3, pp. 459–73.
Turner, P., 2011. 'Methodology, Authority, and Spontaneity: Sources of Spiritual Truthfulness in Late Antique Texts and Life', in Sarris, Dal Santo, and Booth 2011, pp. 11–35.
Uthemann, K.-H., 1998. 'Forms of Communication in the Homilies of Severian of Gabala: A Contribution to the Reception of the Diatribe as a Method of Exposition', trans. J. Cawte, in Cunningham and Allen 1998, pp. 139–77.
Van Dam, R., 1982. 'Hagiography and History: The Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus', *Classical Antiquity* 1.2, pp. 272–308.
Van den Ven, P., 1955–7. 'La patristique et l'hagiographie au concile de Nicée de 787', *Byzantion* 25–7, pp. 325–62.

Van den Ven, P., 1957. 'Les écrits de S. Syméon le Jeune avec trois sermons inédits', *Le Muséon* 70, pp. 1–55.

Van den Ven, P., 1961. 'Le martyrium en triconque dans la Vie de sainte Marthe', *Byzantion* 31, pp. 249–55.

Van den Ven, P., 1962–70. *La Vie ancienne de S. Syméon le Jeune*, 2 vols (Brussels).

Van den Ven, P., 1965. 'L'accession de Jean le Scholastique au siège patriarchal de Constantinople en 565', *Byzantion* 35, pp. 320–52.

Van Ginkel, J. J., 1994. 'John of Ephesus on Emperors: The Perception of the Byzantine Empire by a Monophysite', in R. Lavenant (ed.), *VI Symposium Syriacum 1992* (Rome), pp. 323–35.

Van Ginkel, J. J., 1995. *John of Ephesus: A Monophysite Historian in Sixth-Century Byzantium* (Groningen).

Van Hoof, L. and Van Nuffelen, P., 2017. 'The Historiography of Crisis: Jordanes, Cassiodorus and Justinian in Mid-Sixth-Century Constantinople', *Journal of Roman Studies* 107, pp. 275–300.

Van Nuffelen, P. and Hilkens, A., 2013. 'Recruitment and Conflict in Sixth-Century Antioch: A Micro-Study of *Select Letters* 6,1,5 of Severus of Antioch', *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 17.3, pp. 560–75.

Van Uytfanghe, M., 1993. 'L'hagiographie: un "genre" chrétien ou antique tardif?', *Analecta Bollandiana* 111, pp. 135–88.

Van Uytfanghe, M., 2011. 'L'origine et les ingrédients du discours hagiographique', *Sacris Erudiri* 50, pp. 35–70.

Veilleux, A., 1968. *La liturgie dans le cénobitisme pachômien au quatrième siècle* (Rome).

Veilleux, A., 1980. *Pachomian Koinonia*, Vol. 1: *The Life of Saint Pachomius* (Kalamazoo, MI).

Vikan, G., 1984. 'Art, Medicine, and Magic in Early Byzantium', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 38, pp. 65–86.

Vikan, G., 2003. *Sacred Images and Sacred Power in Byzantium* (Ashgate).

Vivian, M. R., 2006. 'Monastic Mobility and Roman Transformation: The Example of St. Daniel the Stylite', *Studia Patristica* 39, pp. 461–6.

Vivian, M. R., 2010. 'The World of St. Daniel the Stylite: Rhetoric, Religio and Relationships in the Life of the Pillar Saint', in E. D. Digeser, R. M. Frakes, and J. Stephens (eds), *The Rhetoric of Power in Late Antiquity: Religion and Politics in Byzantium, Europe and the Early Islamic World* (London), pp. 147–66.

Vivian, T., 1996. *Journeying into God: Seven Early Monastic Lives* (Minneapolis).

de Vogüé, A., *De Saint Pachôme à Jean Cassien: études littéraires et doctrinales sur le monachisme égyptien à ses débuts* (Rome).

Volbach, W. F., 1966. 'Zur Ikonographie des Styliten Symeon des Jüngeren', in W. N. Schumacher (ed.), *Tortulae: Studien zu altchristlichen und byzantinischen Monumenten* (Rome), pp. 293–99.

Vööbus, A., 1960. *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient*, vol. II (Leuven).

Vorderstrasse, T., 2005. *Al-Mina: A Port of Antioch from Late Antiquity to the End of the Ottomans* (Leiden).

Walmsley, A., 2007a. *Early Islamic Syria: An Archaeological Assessment* (London).

Walmsley, A., 2007b: 'Economic Developments and the Nature of Settlement in the Towns and Countryside of Syria-Palestine, ca. 565–800', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 61, pp. 319–52.

Ward-Perkins, B., 1996. 'Urban Survival and Urban Transformation in the Eastern Mediterranean', in G. P. Brogiolo (ed.), *Early Medieval Towns in the Western Mediterranean* (Mantua), pp. 143–53.

Warren Smith, J., 2004. 'A Just and Reasonable Grief: The Death and Function of a Holy Woman in Gregory of Nyssa's Life of Macrina', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 12.1, pp. 57–84.

Watts, E., 2005. 'Winning the Intracommunal Dialogues: Zacharias Scholasticus' Life of Severus', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 13.4, pp. 437–64.

Watts, E., 2009. 'Interpreting Catastrophe: Disasters in the Works of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite, Socrates Scholasticus, Philostorgius, and Timothy Aelurus', *Journal of Late Antiquity* 2.1, pp. 79–98.

Webb, R., 2008. *Demons and Dancers: Performance in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA).

Weidemann, H.-U., 2013. (ed.), *Asceticism and Exegesis in Early Christianity: The Reception of New Testament Texts in Ancient Ascetic Discourses* (Göttingen).

Whitby, M., 1987. 'Maro the Dendrite: an Anti-Social Holy Man?', in M. Whitby, P. Hardie, and M. Whitby (eds), *Homo Viator: Classical Essays for John Bramble* (Bristol), pp. 309–17.

Whitby, M., 1988. *The Emperor Maurice and his Historian: Theophylact Simocatta on Persian and Balkan Warfare* (Oxford).

Whitby, M., 1991. 'John of Ephesus and the Pagans: Pagan Survivals in the Sixth Century', in M. Salamon (ed.), *Paganism in the Later Roman Empire and in Byzantium* (Krakow), pp. 111–31.

Whitby, M., 1998. 'Evagrius on Patriarchs and Emperors', in M. Whitby (ed.), *The Propaganda of Power: The Role of Panegyric in Late Antiquity* (Leiden), pp. 321–44.

Whitby, M., 2000. *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus* (Liverpool).

Whittow, M., 1990. 'Ruling the Late Roman and Early Byzantine City: A Continuous History', *Past and Present* 129, pp. 3–29.

Whittow, M., 2001. 'Recent Research on the Late-Antique City in Asia Minor: The Second Half of the 6th-c. Revisited', in Lavan 2001, pp. 137–53.

Wickham, C., 2005. *Framing the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford).

Williams, M. A. (ed.), 1982a. *Charisma and Sacred Biography* (Chambersburg, PA).

Williams, M. A. 1982b. 'The *Life of Antony* and the Domesticisation of Charismatic Wisdom', in M. A. Williams 1982a, pp. 23–45.

Williams, M. S., 2008. *Authorised Lives in Early Christian Biography* (Cambridge).

Wilson, A. M., 1989. 'Biblical Imagery in the Preface to Eustratios' Life of Eutychius', *Studia Patristica* 18, pp. 303–9.

Wipszycka, E., 1995. 'La conversion de Saint Antoine: remarques sur les chapitres 2 et 3 du prologue de la Vita Antonii d'Athanase', in C. Fluck, L. Langener, S. Richter, S. Schaten, and G. Wurst (eds), *Divitiae Aegypti: Koptologische und verwandte Studien zu Ehren von Martin Krause* (Wiesbaden), pp. 337–48.

Wipszycka, E., 2009. *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte (IVe–VIIIe siècles)* (Warsaw).

Wipszycka, E., 2021. *Monks and the Hierarchical Church in Egypt and the Levant during Late Antiquity* (Leuven).

Wölfle, E., 1986. *Hypatios. Leben und Bedeutung des Abtes von Rufiniane* (Frankfurt).

Wood, P., 2010. *'We Have No King but Christ': Christian Political Thought in Greater Syria on the Eve of the Arab Conquest* (Oxford).

Wright, G. R. H., 1970. 'The Heritage of the Stylites', *Australian Journal of Biblical Archaeology* 1.3, pp. 82–107.

Yasin, A. M., 2009. *Saints and Church Spaces in the Late Antique Mediterranean* (Cambridge).

Young, F. M., 1973. 'Insight or Incoherence? The Greek Fathers on God and Evil', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 24.2, pp. 113–26.

Youssef, Y. N., 2014. *The Life and Works of Severus of Antioch in the Coptic and Copto-Arabic Tradition: Texts and Commentaries* (Piscataway, NJ).

Zecher, J., 2015. *The Role of Death in the Ladder of Divine Ascent and Greek Ascetic Tradition* (Oxford).

Websites

The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity. Website address: http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk. Authors of individual entries are cited in footnotes.

Index

For the benefit of digital users, indexed terms that span two pages (e.g., 52–53) may, on occasion, appear on only one of those pages.

For the benefit of digital users, indexed terms that span two pages (e.g., 52–53) may, on occasion, appear on only one of those pages.

For the benefit of digital users, indexed terms that span two pages (e.g., 52–53) may, on occasion, appear on only one of those pages.

For the benefit of digital users, indexed terms that span two pages (e.g., 52–53) may, on occasion, appear on only one of those pages.

For the benefit of digital users, indexed terms that span two pages (e.g., 52–53) may, on occasion, appear on only one of those pages.

For the benefit of digital users, indexed terms that span two pages (e.g., 52–53) may, on occasion, appear on only one of those pages.

For the benefit of digital users, indexed terms that span two pages (e.g., 52–53) may, on occasion, appear on only one of those pages.

For the benefit of digital users, indexed terms that span two pages (e.g., 52–53) may, on occasion, appear on only one of those pages.